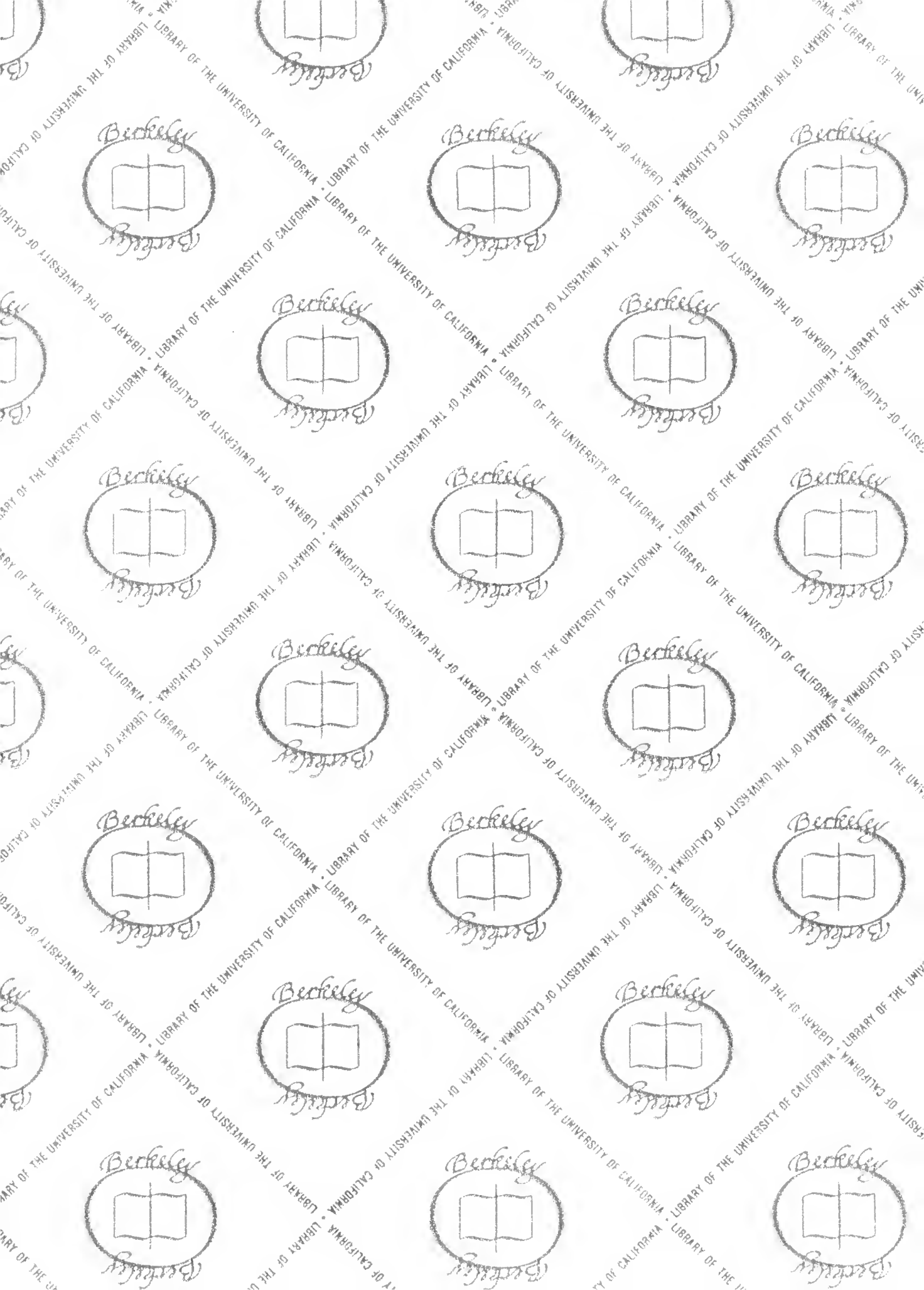


83/15 c

v. I

The Bancroft Library

University of California • Berkeley



Regional Oral History Office
The Bancroft Library

University of California
Berkeley, California

Ernesto Galarza

THE BURNING LIGHT: ACTION AND ORGANIZING
IN THE MEXICAN COMMUNITY IN CALIFORNIA

With an Introduction by
Mary Anna Colwell

Interviews Conducted by
Gabrielle Morris and Timothy Beard
in 1977, 1978 and 1981

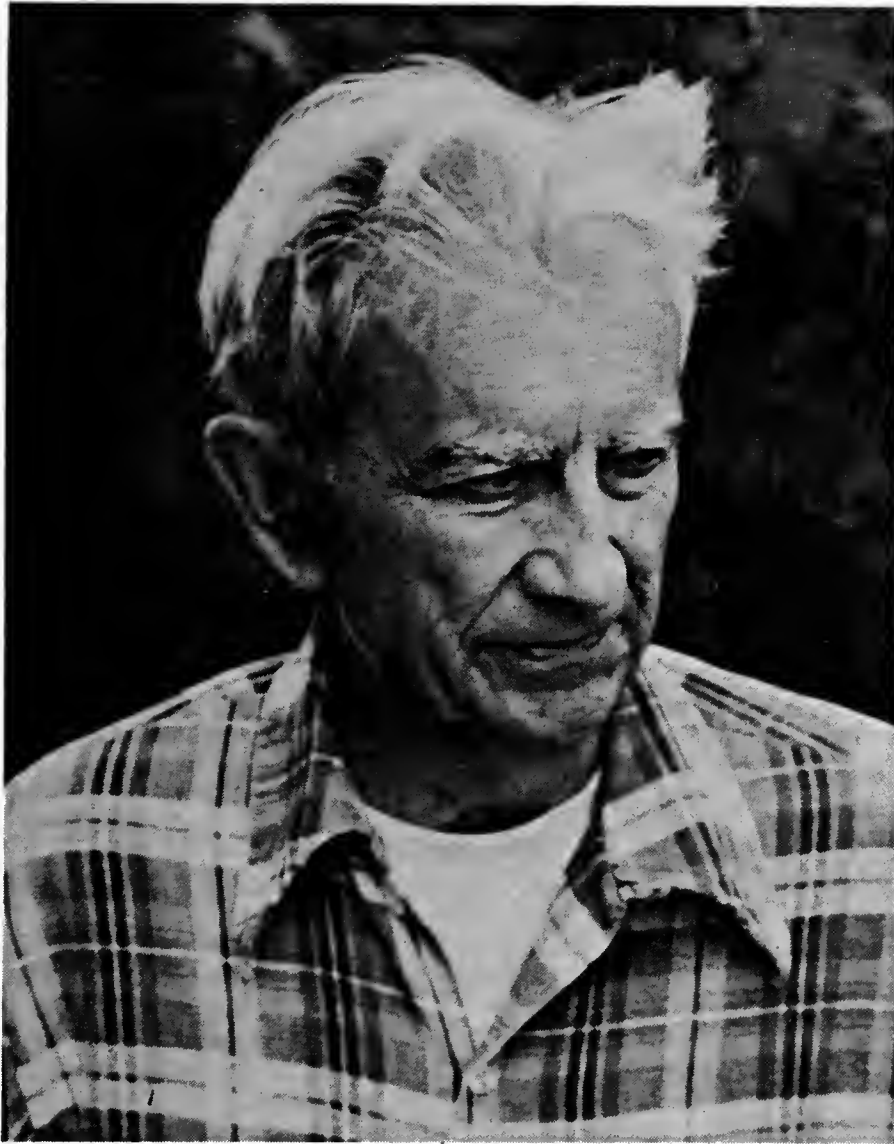
All uses of this manuscript are covered by legal agreements between the Regents of the University of California and Ernesto Galarza dated July 28, 1980 and November 21, 1981. The manuscript is thereby made available for research purposes. All literary rights in the manuscript, including the right to publish, are reserved to The Bancroft Library of the University of California Berkeley. No part of the manuscript may be quoted for publication without the written permission of the Director of The Bancroft Library of the University of California at Berkeley.

Requests for permission to quote for publication should be addressed to the Regional Oral History Office, 486 Library, and should include identification of the specific passages to be quoted, anticipated use of the passages, and identification of the user. The legal agreement with Ernesto Galarza requires that he be notified of the request and allowed thirty days in which to respond.

It is recommended that this oral history be cited as follows:

Ernesto Galarza, "The Burning Light: Action and Organizing in the Mexican Community in California," an oral history conducted in 1977, 1978, and 1981 by Gabrielle Morris and Timothy Beard, Regional Oral History Office, The Bancroft Library, University of California, Berkeley, 1982.

Copy No. 1



ERNESTO GALARZA
November 1979

TABLE OF CONTENTS -- Ernesto Galarza

INTRODUCTION by Mary Anna Colwell	i
INTERVIEW HISTORIES	iii
BIOGRAPHICAL NOTE	v
I THE MEXICAN AMERICANS	
[Excerpts from a Conference Talk, Center for Study of Democratic Institutions, Santa Barbara]	1
Boyhood in Jalco, Mexico; Research Among Farmworkers	2
Progress Since the 1940s	6
Lost Ground	7
Potential Alternatives	9
Beginning to Deal with Poverty	11
II LABOR ORGANIZING STRATEGIES	
[Notes on a Talk at UFW Boycott Office, San Jose]	13
The DiGiorgio Strike	13
Braceros and Wetbacks; U.S-Mexican Relations	16
Organized Labor and the Power Structure	19
Future of the United Farm Workers Union	21
Earlier Labor Gains	24
III STUDENTS' RESPONSIBILITIES TO THE CHICANO COMMUNITY	
[Talk to UC Berkeley Chicano Studies Students]	27
Galarza as University Student	28
Maintaining Contacts with One's Origins	30
Compulsory Mobility	32
Limitations of the Academic Environment; Problems of Graduate Research	33
Scholarship in the Field: Finding Farm Labor and Bilingual Education Data	38
Community Action Formula: Research, Action, Legal Advocacy	41
Student Questions	44
IV SCHOLARLY CONCERNS; CHALLENGES IN BILINGUAL EDUCATION	49
Terminology	49
Accuracy, Memory, and Activism	51
Bilingual Education in Santa Clara County: Controversy and Commitment	59
Climate of Federal Funding	61
Educational Choice and Studio Lab; Ideals of Bilingual Education	62
Legal Pressure on the Alviso Community Organization Project	68
Impact on the Mexican Experience	71

V	SOCIAL ACTION AND REACTION	75
	Studio Laboratory Program and Strategy, 1972-1975	75
	Later Retrenchment and Reinforcement of Traditional Administration	83
	Teach Training	87
	Bilingual Education in 1978	89
	Chicano and Black Social Movements and Acculturation	92
	Federal Impetus and Impact	100
	The Continuing Story of Alviso	105
	Personal Manifesto	107
VI	THE MINI-LIBROS	113
	Evolution of the Mini-libros	113
	Writing for Children in Spanish	117
	The Mini-libros and Bilingual Education	122
	A Personal Look at the Mini-libros	124
	The Mini-libros -- A Discovery of Spanish Language and Culture	129
	A Bicultural Heritage	132
	TAPE GUIDE	137
	APPENDICES	
	A. Correspondence from Ernesto Galarza to Dr. Charles Knight, Ms. Olivia Martinez, and Mr. Jose Villa, September-October 1977	138
	B. Partial Bibliography compiled by Timothy Beard	143
	INDEX	150

INTRODUCTION

In college in an eastern school I read of the organizing work of Ernesto Galarza among farm workers in the fields of California in the late forties. The extraordinary uphill effort begun then which was not to bear fruit until many years later remained in my memory. So it was with great anticipation and a sense of privilege that I agreed to arrange a meeting with Dr. Galarza to discuss with him the effort to save Alviso, the barrio on the south shore of San Francisco Bay which was a major concern of his in the middle 1970s.

The John Hay Whitney Foundation of New York had been supporting Dr. Galarza's work for some period of time and the then executive director, Arch Gillies, thought the LARAS Fund with which I was connected would be interested in his work. That first personal meeting with Ernesto and his wife, Mae, was informative, inspiring, and enormously rewarding. I became more aware of his vital work in ending the bracero program, his role in developing leadership among younger Chicanos who are now prominent in California and the nation, and his long background as an educator. To my pleasure and delight, he gave me copies of his several small volumes of picture story/poems for children in Spanish and English, Mini Libros, which were originally inspired by the need for Spanish books for his own daughter, many years before.

Subsequently, my contact was with him as a careful administrator of the small sum which the LARAS Fund made available to support community organizing and public education in Alviso. I think LARAS had no other grantee who made \$20,000 go so far, and all of his reports on activities, success, failure, were fascinating to read.

During this period I retained the sense of Ernesto Galarza as an unsung hero--perhaps the Spanish-speaking community knew him well--but most others did not. In time I began to realize that he and his work were not well known among younger people of Spanish descent--whether Chicanos or Latinos, even in the West where he has worked for many decades. Some of the activities among the Spanish-speaking community that I met did not know who he was, or had only a vague notion that his was a name they had heard somewhere. Not an unique situation surely, but a regrettable one, especially in a community trying to instill a sense of group pride in the accomplishments of past and present leaders.

The trustees of the LARAS Fund were intrigued with the work being done by Dr. Galarza and by my reports of my meetings with him. They sought a way to be of further help, as the Fund was disposing of all assets and closing. At the same time we had made the acquaintance of the Regional Oral History Office. Negotiations to do an oral history with Ernesto Galarza were not simple and for a while it appeared as if the project would not be possible. Nevertheless the board approved a contribution to ROHO to facilitate the development of an oral history with this remarkable man.

It is a great pleasure to acknowledge that the text which follows is the result of hours of work by Gabrielle Morris and other members of the ROHO staff, and hours of time and talking by Ernesto, and to feel that the LARAS money helped get them together. For readers who are meeting with Galarza and his ideas for the first time in this account, let me recommend they not fail to read his own books. Old friends and supporters will not be surprised to read here that he is still actively engaged in a struggle he considers important for the education and empowerment of his people, to whom his life and work has been dedicated for so many years.

Mary Anna Colwell, Ph.D.

1 November 1980
Corte Madera, California

INTERVIEW HISTORIES

While conducting a study of charitable foundations in the San Francisco Bay Area, the Regional Oral History Office first learned of Ernesto Galarza. In the creative surge of the 1960s when considerable private and public funding was going into self-help projects responding to long-standing social concerns, Dr. Galarza received a number of grants and also became an informal consultant on the Mexican American community in California. Further inquiry revealed that here was a dedicated spokesman for sizable but seldom-heard segments of people, a man who had worked tirelessly in agricultural labor, bilingual education, and community development in the distinguished tradition of activist scholar. With the support and encouragement of the LARAS Fund and research assistance from the Stanford University and Berkeley's Chicano Studies libraries, arrangements were made in 1976 to undertake a biographical memoir with Galarza to document and honor his remarkable career. That this was easier said than done is a tribute to his philosophy and his energy.

Galarza is a wiry intense man with a shock of rumpled gray hair and piercing blue eyes who has lived with his gentle wife Mae in a cheerful small home surrounded by flowers and fruit trees on the outskirts of San Jose since the 1940s. From this serene setting he has sallied forth to challenge successive segments of the established order and has counseled and inspired a steady stream of hopeful young Mexican Americans wishing to have an impact on that order.

As a child, because he could speak English, Galarza was the spokesman to official bodies for the concerns of his family and friends about poor living conditions in their Sacramento Valley harvest camps. Since then, his energies have continued to be directed to gaining recognition for the needs and aspirations of the unheard through vigorous advocacy supported by extensive data patiently gathered firsthand.

When he was a doctoral student in sociology at Columbia University, his dissertation was based on field work in an area of personal concern, rather than on someone else's records of an issue long past. Going back to the land he had left as a small child during revolutionary upheaval, Galarza traveled the rural states of Mexico to gather data from the source for his study of the country's electric power industry, which in turn built upon an analysis of social structure in his earlier thesis on the Catholic church in Mexico.

Rather than remain in the comfortable detachment of academia and officialdom, he returned to the fields in California in 1947 as an organizer for a marathon effort to create a farmworkers union, during which he became known for his concern for the needs of all Mexican Americans working in the fields, not only those in the union. In the 1960s, when the federal government began extensive new social programs, first in bilingual education and then in community development, Galarza organized and implemented innovative programs based on planning and continuing participation by those to whom the programs were directed.

And still in the 1970s, speaking to university students, he returns again to the importance of taking theoretical knowledge out into the community to be used to solve immediate problems.

Galarza has published three books about the farmworker struggles and has deposited the exhaustive documentation on which they are based in the Stanford University Library. He continues to be deeply involved in current crises in education and community self-determination in the San Jose area and has given the papers concerning them to those he hopes will carry on what he has begun. He believes in looking forward rather than back, in speaking of the goal rather than his own life, and in not speaking without specific data at hand.

Therefore, instead of the chronological, autobiographical memoir originally planned, the present volume is a collection of talks by and conversations with Dr. Galarza, recorded between 1977 and 1981, which provide a valuable view of the consistency of his thought and the dedication of his work. In these pages, he is speaking to a scholarly gathering, to a meeting of union organizers, to Chicano studies students, to a generalist oral historian, and to a specialist in children's literature. While describing different parts of his experience to these different listeners, he speaks to each of them of determination in the face of continued frustration, a message with implications for all of society.

Dr. Galarza reviewed the transcripts of the recordings before they were final-typed, and was pleased that the talk to the Center for the Study of Democratic Institutions had surfaced. A partial bibliography of his publications is included as an appendix. It is hoped that this brief collection will encourage further study of Galarza's writing and papers and, in due time, a biography of a remarkable and engaging man.

Gabrielle Morris
Interviewer-Editor

15 March 1981
Regional Oral History Office
486 The Bancroft Library
University of California at Berkeley

Ernesto and Mae Galarza were interviewed in their home on March 10, 1981. Although it was obviously tiring for Ernesto to sit through an interview of an hour and a half, he did so graciously and with good cheer. His voice did grow weak and is hardly audible on the tape from time to time.

The typed transcript and two pages of clarifying questions were sent to the Galarzas. They filled in most of the inaudible sections of the transcript and gave short written answers to the questions. The transcript was returned promptly. Most of the questions have been incorporated into the transcript in the form that they were presented to the Galarzas. The answers are reproduced exactly as they wrote them.

Timothy Beard
Interviewer-Editor

1 November 1981
El Cerrito, California

BIOGRAPHICAL NOTE

ERNESTO GALARZA was born in 1905 in the village of Jalcocotán near Tepic, Nayarit, Mexico. He came to the United States with his mother and two uncles to escape the precarious conditions of the Madero revolution in 1911. Galarza lived in the Sacramento barrio and while attending school worked as a farm laborer, cannery hand and court interpreter. He continued his education receiving his B.A. from Occidental College, M.A. from Stanford University and Ph.D. from Columbia University. Teacher, writer, and sociologist, Dr. Galarza's life career has been active and varied. He served as Director of Research and Education for the National Agricultural Workers Union, AFL-CIO, and became deeply involved in the DiGiorgio Corporation strikes and court cases of the 1950's and 60's, and later with Cesar Chavez and the National Farm Workers Association. Galarza has also served as a program analyst for the Economic and Youth Opportunity Agency, O.E.O., in Los Angeles, and been involved with various Mexican-American organizations, serving as a consultant to the Southwest Council of La Raza, and as chairman of the National Committee of La Raza Unida. His other interests include the development of bi-lingual educational programs and Spanish teaching materials.

PROFESSIONAL EXPERIENCE

Farm worker, cannery and packingshed laborer.
 Co-Director, private elementary progressive school, New York.
 Teacher, elementary grades, Spanish, Social Studies.
 Specialist in Education - Pan American Union.
 Chief, Division of Labor and Social Information, Pan American Union.
 Lecturer: University of Denver, Claremont College, John Marshall College of Law
 Chairman, National Committee of Classroom Teachers (Development of Bi-Lingual Materials for elementary schools.)
 Research Associate for Latin America - Foreign Policy Association.
 Director of Research and Education - National Agricultural Workers Union, AFL-CIO field organizer in Florida, Louisiana, Texas, Arizona, California.
 Counsel, Committee on Education and Labor, U.S. House of Representatives.
 Program Analyst, Economic and Youth Opportunity Agency, OEO Los Angeles, Calif.
 Consultant - Government of Bolivia - Santa Barbara County Schools - National Farmers Union - Ford Foundation - U.S. Civil Rights Comm. - Southwest Council of "LA RAZA."
 Department of Education, Housing and Welfare.
 Chairman - National Committee of "LA RAZA UNIDA."
 Associate Research Professor, Notre Dame University (Sociology).
 Distinguished Visiting Professor, San Jose State College (Education).
 Training Counselor, Alviso Family Health Foundation.
 Director - Studio/Laboratory for Spanish teaching materials - San Jose State College.

PUBLICATIONS

Editor, Young Readers Series, Pan American Union
 Editor, Inter-American Reports
 Crisis of Panamericanism...The Case of Bolivia
 Labor Trends in Latin America...The Chualar Accident

From finding guide to Ernesto Galarza's papers,
 Stanford University Libraries, Department of
 Special Collections.

I THE MEXICAN AMERICANS

[Excerpts from a Conference Talk, Center for the Study of Democratic Institutions, Santa Barbara]

[Date of recording: ca. 1959-1960]##

Galarza: I became a leader of the Mexican community at the age of eight for the simple reason that I knew perhaps two dozen words of English.

Hoffman: That is Ernesto Galarza telling a conference how he entered the movement to improve conditions for the Mexican-American farmworker, and this is Alec Hoffman, speaking for the Center for the Study of Democratic Institutions, where the conference took place.

At the time Mr. Galarza became a leader of the Mexican-American community at the age of eight, he was working as a hop picker on a ranch twenty miles from Sacramento, California. Since then he has been an organizer of labor; he has been a teacher; he has been active in politics and in government administration; and he is the author of a number of books, among them Strangers in Our Fields* and Merchants of Labor,** an account of the bracero program for temporary importation of Mexican farmworkers. Above all, he has been a tireless, devoted leader in the U.S. Mexican-American community.

##This symbol indicates that a tape or a segment of a tape has begun or ended. For a guide to the tapes see page 137.

*Ernesto Galarza, Strangers in Our Fields, (Washington, D.C.), 1956.

**Ernesto Galarza, Merchants of Labor, (Santa Barbara, McNally & Loftin), 1964.

Hoffman: During our conference, Dr. Galarza presented a program for action in the 1960s, and spoke movingly of his personal experiences. We present his remarks in full. Dr. Galarza.

Boyhood in Jalco, Mexico; Research Among Farmworkers

Galarza: I think all of my life I have heard it said of the Mexican American-- Carlton Beales put it in one way and others have put it in other ways--"The trouble with the Mexican American is that he's so apathetic." I have thought a great deal about this too; and I've come to the conclusion that it really isn't apathy. It's self-protection. I know, because when I was a very small boy, I was a member of the inner circle, the family circle, of a group of people who, viewed from the outside, were extremely apathetic. They weren't interested in who was going to be the next president of Mexico; they weren't interested in who was the commanding general of the military zone; they weren't interested in the location of the nearest university or college or high school. They were interested in tomorrow's ration of corn. But very early in life, I began to listen to sermons preached at us about our apathy. So when we came to California and heard Anglo-Americans scold us for being apathetic, it made me think, "Are we really apathetic? Are we unresponsive and insensitive?"

I've come to the conclusion that we're not. If there's anything in the cultural heritage--and I think there is a great deal--what is generally regarded as apathy is a system of defenses of people who have a long social history of being kicked around, and who have in their personal lives and through the family inheritance and cultural inheritance learned that by and large their environment is hostile, that they are surrounded by forces and men who will do them in at every turn. So apathy begins to be a kind of obvious indifference, a lack of responsiveness that is really self-protection.

I have often thought that it would be very interesting to write an anthropological thesis that might be called "The Money Belt, The Sock, The Piggy Bank, and The Bank Account." I remember in Mexico in the village where I was born, the adult men carried with them day and night a belt--it was a kind of an extended wallet. They tied it around their middles under their shirts and their pants, and this was all the money they possessed. They worked with that belt on them and they slept with that belt on them, because their circle of confidence was limited to their own persons. They were always armed and ready to defend their capital, which they kept tightly buckled to their bodies.

Galarza: But a little farther along in social evolution, these men learned to put their capital into a sock. It was very interesting. They didn't wear socks, but they would occasionally buy one to put their [monedas] in. They would put it under the corn crib that usually was to be found in every cottage. Now, this was an indication that their circle of confidence was increasing, because they no longer felt compelled to carry their money around their bellies. But it was still concealed, and there was always the woman of the house to protect it.

And then a little later on there appeared the piggy bank. That was usually on a shelf. The piggy bank was the third step in the expansion of the circle of confidence, because there you put your coins, and everybody could see that the piggy bank was on the shelf. In a certain way, you were trusting the family; you were trusting strangers who would drop in for supper and see your piggy bank there on the shelf.

Then came the bank account. There you had really matured. Your circle of confidence had increased and expanded to embrace a banking system run by men you never saw and whose accounts were kept by people you didn't even know.

In these four stages, it seems to me, we have a key to the question of apathy. I would never accuse a man who, in a Mexican village, kept his money in a belt tied around his body of being apathetic. I would merely say that under the circumstances under which he lived, and given his experience, he was an extremely smart Mexican.

I also want to pick up another stray thought, and that is the assumption that we who lived in a different culture in the Republic of Mexico and were born into and survived a feudal economy and a feudal society and now are living in something that is totally and radically different from that society, that we have been emancipated from something. I doubt that very much. I was set on a train of thought not long ago when I read a comment that Mayor Shelley made apropos of this competition that's now going on between Los Angeles and San Francisco as to which of these two urban monstrosities is the cultural leader of the West Coast. You remember what Mayor Shelley said. He said that one of these days, San Francisco's going to have such a wonderful cultural center that it's going to make Los Angeles look like "any little Mexican village." I thought to myself, "Well, what's wrong with being a little Mexican village?" I remember having lived for years in one. I remember now many details under the pressure of Mayor Shelley's comment.

One of the vast differences between the city of Los Angeles where I now temporarily reside--fortunately temporarily--and the village of Jalco where I was born: In Jalco, we had a settlement of a

Galarza: hundred families, and we didn't have electric lights. So in the evening, as the sun was going down, people would sit in front of their cottages and because they were too poor to buy kerosene, they would talk by the twilight. The pace of conversation, the duration of conversation, even the quality of conversation was determined by the progress of the twilight. And the conversation would last until dark. Then the small kids would be sent to bed, and then the young men and young women. I can remember many, many nights going to sleep hearing the rumble of the voices of men in the darkness in front of our cottage. I have yet to hear conversation of this type in the city of Los Angeles.

But more than that, this was not conversation about smog: it was conversation about important things. Once in a very great while, I can remember that we were sent to bed unusually early. That, to me, was always an alert. I wouldn't go to sleep those nights; but I would listen more intently. In the back yard of our cottage, the rumble of voices would increase and would last longer through the night. In the morning I would get up, and sure enough, I would see in the hard-baked earth in back of our cottage, slits in the earth about this long [gestures], and an inch or two deep. I would count them, and I would know how many men had met in our back yard the night before. If I counted thirty slits, I knew that there had been thirty men there. Each slit was a place where a machete had been struck into the ground. It was these men who sparked the revolution in my home town. I heard them talk in the darkness of the evening.

I have then asked myself, "What is there so bad about being a little old Mexican village, if I could see in my own experience that it was in these little Mexican villages that one of the most portentous events in the twentieth century history of the Americas started?" In my own back yard, the Mexican Revolution.

I had other stray thoughts. I reacted with intense interest to a remark that was made this morning that one of the difficulties of the Mexican-American community is that it has not pinpointed the enemy. This criticism was followed up by another which did pinpoint the enemy in the form of a defective educational system. I think I ought to tell you that some fifteen or twenty years ago, more than that, perhaps, I asked myself the very same question. I had been working and living with farm laborers in this state, and I had moved with them up and down the state for many years, coming at last to the conclusion that one of our difficulties was that we had not defined the target: who was the enemy? So I spent some ten years of my life in an experiment. What happens to a Mexican-American community and those who presume to lead it when they do pinpoint the enemy? And we did. I helped to organize some twenty locals of farmworkers in this state from Yuba City to the Mexican border. It was our continuous effort not only to organize the farmworkers,

Galarza: but to try to help them to understand where the enemy was. I think we succeeded. In fact, the best evidence that we did succeed is that we were so thoroughly destroyed.

In some ten years of what I like to call dynamic research (and someone will tell me if somebody else has thought of this before)--and by this I mean in areas of social experience where information is awfully hard to get because it's very closely guarded; the only way to get it is to go out and not ask for the information, but to challenge those who are keeping it to themselves--in California it became obvious to me that the way to get at an understanding of why farm labor was so exploited and lived so miserably in a hundred hamlets in this state, the way to do that was to engage the enemy!

So we organized with the purpose of taking down a peg or two the power of the Associated Farmers of California, of the banks and insurance companies who have very high investments in agriculture, of other institutions that carry a role in the background as investors and as manipulators of wealth. Step by step, in a series of strikes, we challenged that power. We named institutions and we named persons. We named places. Through the years, the picture unfolded. But to the degree that we did define the opposition, the opposition grew in strength, in determination to destroy the union, and it did destroy the union.

I want to warn every Mexican American who thinks of himself as a leader. Before he puts together an organization of any kind that is going after specific targets of power, I want to warn him: he's asking for some pretty rough treatment. One of the things we found out, for instance, was that the agencies of government--and they are not Mexican-American agencies; they're not inventions of the Mexican peasant come to this country--the agencies of state and federal power were conniving, collaborating and conspiring with the economic power structure to destroy that union. And they did!

Now the story of how that destruction was accomplished is a very important story. I've written a couple of chapters of it and I commend it to you with no sense of immodesty, because it not only describes a specific instance of the destruction of a growing community among the farmworkers in this country, but it describes how that destruction was accomplished. I think that any challenge to power in these democratic United States is going to, as of now, run into the same kinds of difficulties.

Progress Since the 1940s

Hoffman: Dr. Galarza turned next to the program for action he had prepared for our conference. He described first the areas in which the Mexican-American community had made some progress since the 1940s.

Galarza: I suggest that there are four areas in which we can note progress in the Mexican-American community. The first of these is progress against discrimination. I'm not going to try to document this; I'm simply saying to you that after living in California for some forty years off and on, I am convinced that the Mexican American as an ethnic minority is much less subject to economic and ethnic discrimination than he was when I was a boy.

Second, I suggest that the Mexican-American has begun to climb at least the lower rungs of the economic ladder. Ninety percent of the people I knew when I was a boy in the Central Valley were farm-workers. As a matter of fact, one of the reasons why I became a leader of the Mexican community in the State of California at the age of eight--an accusation which I would now very strongly resent: of being a leader--I became a leader of the Mexican-American community for the simple reason that I knew perhaps two dozen words of English. I was working as a hop picker twenty miles from Sacramento. Among some two hundred families on that huge ranch, babies were dying. There was a meeting held in camp, at which it was decided to send somebody to Sacramento to find somebody to whom the story could be told. There was a great to-do about who should be sent; clearly, it had to be somebody who knew English.

Since by that time I had learned more than a dozen words of English, I was made a member of this protest committee, and I was sent to Sacramento on my bike to talk with Mr. Lubin, the chairman of the Housing Commission of the State of California, who promptly sent out a doctor. He found out the reason why those babies were dying. [It] was that we were drinking water one quarter of a mile downstream from the stables of that ranch.

Since that time, I look around in Los Angeles and San Jose and other communities where I have lived, and I see that far more than ten percent of us are not farmworkers anymore. We're professors of universities; we are bureaucrats in the EYOA such as I am for the moment, temporarily; we are union business agents; we're journalists and so on. This has happened in the last four years, and it's increasing in pace, and I think in scope. Along with it has come an ability to talk and articulateness on the part of some of the Mexican Americans. Some of the most articulate are around this table today.

Galarza: This was not true in 1915 and in 1921. I sometimes think now that one of our problems is that we have too many spokesmen. But they're articulate. And the time will never come again when the Mexican American will not be heard from. What he says and how clearly he says it is up to him, his responsibility. But never again is he going to be unheard.

Along with this has gone something that I call testing--testing--the mechanics of American democracy. We who have made two or three rungs up the ladder have had unusual opportunities to see how the Anglo-Americans do things: how they lobby; how they run their parties; how they caucus. How they manipulate and contrive all of those niceties: some of them clean; some of them unclean. But all of them niceties of political contrivance. It's been fascinating. Not only that, but we have learned how to use some of those contrivances. Sometimes for personal benefit and personal glory, sometimes for the good of the commonwealth. But we have really just been testing.

I think we fall into two general kinds of Mexican Americans: those of us who have come to the conclusion that the American political system is about as good as they come and that you don't have to test it with values, that it works--it's a wonderfully pragmatic instrument for governing 190 million people and what more can anyone ask. But then there are some of us--and I count myself among them--who believe that the matter of values in political behavior is still very important. But we have been testing. As we try to penetrate the Anglo-American culture, we've tried to see whether the American political system really works in terms of human values.

Lost Ground

Hoffman: Next, Dr. Galarza turned to matters in which the Mexican Americans have not only not made progress, but have even lost ground.

Galarza: In spite of these progresses that we've made, we have also lost some ground. First of all, the dispersal of leadership--ideological, political and residential. By ideological I mean the loss of men who achieve political distinction and who are appointed by a governor or a president and who then become separated--in terms of values and ideas--from the Mexican-American community--the poor community, let me stress that.

##

Galarza: There is a political dispersal. What happens? We have a person who is of distinction, of great ability, of great skill in his chosen profession, and he's plucked out of the community and sent to

Galarza: Sacramento or to Washington. This is not to be criticized from the standpoint of that individual. I think individuals are entitled to a large measure of personal satisfaction in life. How large that measure must be is for them to decide. But from the standpoint of the Mexican-American community, this is a process of decapitation that goes on continuously. Some of us are sent abroad on all kinds of federal programs--I've been on them--and things happen to the Mexican Americans who are removed even that distance from their own community.

The Mexican American also has suffered what I'd call the strains on the community. The Mexican Americans in California are no exception to the impact of mechanization and automation in agriculture and in industry and indeed even in the service branch of the economy. In the packing houses and canneries of California today, I think the manpower at peak of production is something around 45,000 people, and these are mostly Mexican Americans. It used to be in the neighborhood of 80 to 85,000 people. All of this displacement has happened in the last fifteen years. Today there are machines picking tomatoes, picking grapes, picking oranges and so on. This means that wherever a Mexican-American group of fifty or 100 or 200 or 300 families has somehow found refuge with jobs available, some kind of a steady income, this economic root of the community has been cut at the base. Automation and mechanization have hit hard at these nuclei of community in California. Mobility has been forced upon these people, and dispersal.

Another factor which is negative is the failure of the trade-union leadership in this state.

Hoffman: Dr. Galarza's remarks were made before the successful election of the National Farmworker's Association under the leadership of Cesar Chavez.

Galarza: The fact that a farm labor union was destroyed in this state by its opponents is in large part due to the failure of the leadership of the trade union movement to respond to the requests for help of the farmworkers in a fundamental way. The farm labor union in which I worked posed a basic issue of power and of the exploitation of that power. Having watched the reactions of trade-union leadership in California and throughout the nation to the situation which we revealed step by step, and having seen this leadership shrink from responsibility and leave those thousands upon thousands of farmworkers to their fate taught me a lesson. The lesson, I think, is this: the Mexican American, as a minority, can no longer look into the future with the hope that in the trade-union movement they will find the taproot of their salvation.

Galarza: Finally, we have now throughout California the vivid proof, the dramatic evidence of what's happening to us all. I have thought that I could summarize this process of disintegration of the community, of displacement, of abandonment by describing what I call shoestring and doughnut communities. Many thousands upon thousands of Mexican Americans today are living in these types of communities. The shoestring community is a community that I have seen grow along the ditch-banks of this state. The classical one is South Dos Palos. These migrants who have been displaced find bits of land running parallel to an irrigation ditch. It's along this ditch, which provides them with water, that they buy their inexpensive sandlots and there they pitch their trailers and their shacks. The profile of these communities is a shoestring.

And then there are the doughnut communities, in which you will find hundreds of thousands of Mexicans living today. These we find in the cities. A place like, for instance, the community called the frog, La Rana, in Torrance (Los Angeles). It's a community of some 200 Mexican families who settled there many years ago as farmworkers--most of them--and who have now been surrounded by progress. They're waiting for the day when they will be urbanly redeveloped. The doughnut community, therefore, I would define from the experience of the Mexican American as a hole where poor people live, surrounded by people with dough. I think these processes are increasing, and I wouldn't talk about them if I did not think so.

Potential Alternatives

Hoffman: Dr. Galarza turned next to the institutional alternatives open to the Mexican-American community: the public and private social services: those that fall into a corporate pattern; and whatever opportunities exist for the Mexican American in the industrial, business, and agricultural sectors.

Galarza: Then I come to the institutional alternatives. Since the Mexican-American communities, in agriculture and in industry and in the service trades, have lost their economic foothold and seem not to be able to regain it, isn't there something at hand that we can lay hold of even though we do it with the gesture of a man who is drowning and who grabs for a straw? It's in this mood of grabbing for straws that I have suggested that we consider now what are the possible foci around which some kind of community can be reorganized. I see three possibilities, all of which I think are not positive chances.

Galarza: One is the social services. One of us mentioned the settlement houses this morning. I've worked in them, and I've seen them. They do a remarkable service, they do a lot of good among many human beings; but I don't think they are the centers around which a community of Mexican Americans is going to reorganize itself and move forward to significant social action in the years to come.

Then there's the corporate pattern. The corporate pattern, I think, is an obvious one. It's the pattern imposed by the market. Corporations in America today make their plans not for Kern County, not for California, not indeed for the United States but for the world. They locate or move their centers of production, their distribution systems and so forth entirely in the light of what the business calls for, not in the light of what community stability, the continuity of family life would require. From what I have seen in California in the last thirty years in the confrontation of corporate structures and poor people, I feel convinced that from the human side of things, there is no future for the Mexican-American community if he's going to wait for the corporate pattern of organization to come and save him.

What else is there? Can you build a community around the small businessman, around the small manufacturer, around the family farm? I think the answer to this question is coming in, has been coming in during the last twenty years, that it is not here either that communities can be reorganized.

Well, I've come to a desperate point in my analysis. What is there? So I have grabbed at a straw, and I call it the constitutional alternatives. We have now legislation in the United States approved by Congress, enacted, and now in operation. The Economic Opportunity Act of 1964, and a number of complementary federal laws, such as the Housing and Urban Redevelopment Act of 1965. Putting these laws together, I come to what I think is a preface for action in the 1960s, which is the theme of my talk. I'm suggesting two things to the Mexican Americans and their spokesmen and the people who feel that they carry the responsibility for the community.

I'm suggesting first of all that the Economic Opportunity Act of 1964 be used as the tool for organizing communities, and that this organization take place around the program, the specific social service programs, which the Economic Opportunity Act provides for. What I'm suggesting is around each of these program proposals, whatever may be their content, that the local community be organized so that the process of social service change, instead of the community waiting for hand-me-down services of all sorts and descriptions, they become participants in the planning, in the administration of those services; and that their interest be kept alive and results be shown by reason of the fact that there is money in the federal treasury to do these things.

Galarza: Around those service programs, I believe that many hundreds--indeed thousands--of Mexican Americans can be involved, and that around them, perhaps, some kind of a community center, both psychological and physical community center, can be developed. Out of this, I would hope, there would come something new which has not yet been tried by the Economic Opportunity Agency, and that is the granting of developmental funds, community development grants once this structure is operating--that I've described--so that the people living in those communities may little by little be led to an understanding of what's still lacking in the picture that is required to stabilize themselves as families and as members of a community.

If the Economic Opportunity Act of 1964 is used as the organizing reserve, then the other federal acts can be drawn upon to finance, to fund the services in a community once organized, which have been up to date either missing, or if they were present, they were of the hand-me-down type of service. In all of this process of program organization, of community organization, or participation and so on, a vital element is the training of the poor people themselves who are coming into these programs. We in the EYOA in Los Angeles don't have--we haven't yet started to provide people, residents of the poverty areas, with the training, the facts, the knowledge and the experience that they must have in order to know what they're doing. This is, in my judgment, one of the great weaknesses of the Economic Opportunities program. And if it is not provided, it will fail.

We have, for instance, what we call community aides. These are people with incomes of less than \$4,000 a year who move into responsible positions in the community group. But we leave them high and dry. We don't pick them up instantly to teach them day to day, step by step, what those responsibilities are and how they can move into higher levels of experience and service. I don't intend to eliminate the social services as we've known them; I hope they stand by; they're necessary, they're useful. The impoverished communities would be much worse off if they weren't there. But they must stop conceiving of themselves as centers of social organization and social power.

Beginning to Deal with Poverty

Hoffman: Finally, Dr. Galarza turns to the War on Poverty.

Galarza: And that brings me to the concluding two points. I've said before that in my judgment the War on Poverty at this stage is a mere skirmish. I don't think it's going to become a war until the amount

Galarza: of money appropriated by Congress enables us to mount a massive attack on the problem of unemployment. I mean by that not just the problem of creating jobs, I mean the basic decisions that our society is continuously making; such as, for instance, the allocation of resources: where money in vast quantities shall be invested, and how it shall be spent. This is what creates jobs.

To those decisions the poor are not parties. I suggest we have got to keep battling for what I call anthropomorphic education. It's a terrible phrase. What I mean to emphasize there is that we can't stop pressing the schools to teach as if they were teaching children and not systems. Do you know that in certain parts of Los Angeles many people have made a wonderful discovery? They've discovered that one teacher with fifteen children and an expert assistant can do a better job than one teacher with no assistance and forty kids. The question is no longer discovery and demonstration, the question is now: can we hold the line so that ratio of one teacher to fifteen children can become universal? I hope that we don't give one inch. And I trust that the restructuring of educational methods, the downgrading of status and authority where it now is in the upper strata of administration will be accelerated. I hope the time comes when the greatest prestige, the largest salary, the most attractive emoluments in a public school system will be those of the kindergarten teacher. In reverse process, when we get to the superintendent of schools, he will be a guy who's around to be called on when he's needed.

I want to conclude by saying that, again, I haven't been talking of fundamentals really. Not until this economy provides all men with sufficient income--I'm not talking of the income of a day or a week; I'm talking about the income of a year--so that their wives and the mothers of their children can stay home and take care of the families; until we have massive investments in places like Watts that will obliterate the slums and make it possible for other slums not to take their places; until we reconsider such things as urban development so that they become other than weapons for displacing these doughnut communities from what part of the landscape to another, I don't think the job will have begun. I close with the question: Are the Mexican Americans ready? That I don't know. But I think some of us in this room intend to find out.

Hoffman: You have been listening to one in a series of three programs on Mexican Americans in the United States. The speaker was Dr. Ernesto Galarza--teacher, trade-union organizer, and author. Dr. Galarza's remarks were recorded during a conference on Mexican-Americans at the Center for the Study of Democratic Institutions in Santa Barbara. This is Alec Hoffman from the Center for the Study of Democratic Institutions.

II LABOR-ORGANIZING STRATEGIES, 1930-1970

[Notes on a Talk at United Farmworkers Boycott Office, San Jose]*

[Date of recording: May 7, 1974]##

The DiGiorgio Strike

Question: Do you think the political scene now is conducive to a better understanding of what the Mexican community is trying to do?

Galarza: I'm having a hard time knowing just where it stands; that goes for the Mexicans and for the Farmworkers. I think if you look at the situation from the standpoint of where the Delano union is now, I'm very concerned over the possibility that Nixon may be able to weather this storm and a reaction may set in in the country between now and '76 that would strengthen those [opposed to farmworker organizing]. I don't think it's likely to happen but I'm not sure that it won't happen. [discusses Watergate situation with Nixon and tapes] I am watching the American people to see what they do.

I met Nixon in Bakersfield at hearings in November, 1949 of a subcommittee of the House of Representatives to investigate the DiGiorgio strike. One of three representatives was Richard Nixon. He was there two full days and a half day and cross-examined six or seven of us who appeared as witnesses. My personal recollection was him sitting across the table as inquisitor and the witnesses were sitting on this side. The thing I remember about Richard Nixon was the way in which he played to his audience. That room in the Bakersfield Inn was filled to capacity with growers from all over the state who came to see the union raked over the coals, and Nixon

*Tape recorded by Anne Loftis for her book.

Galarza: was in glory. I remember his face. Every time he made a point, like scoring the union for bloodshed or subversion or whatever point he made, he would look up at his audience to see how he was doing.

And this happened so continuously that I began to wonder whether his mind was on the witness or on the crowd. I couldn't tell. That committee went back to Washington. Incidentally, the chairman of that committee was a Democrat, because as you remember it was a Democratic Congress. The second member was a Democrat and ranking member for the Republicans was Nixon.

That committee went back to Washington. There was an enormous amount of heat placed on the chairman to issue a report hostile to the union or to the effect that the union officers, which included myself, had embezzled strike funds in the hundreds of thousands of dollars, and that we had published a motion picture film, which was a pack of lies.

But the chairman wouldn't yield, and, as you know, in the House of Representatives the chairman of the subcommittee is the top dog. Nothing happens on that subcommittee that he doesn't approve of. And so this chairman refused to issue a report hostile to the union. He killed it.

But the DiGiorgios--Mr. DiGiorgio and his corporation--absolutely had to have a report. That was what the whole thing was about. That was why they had the committee come in. So what they did was this--Congressman Werdel, who was not on the subcommittee but who was congressman from that district, on the 9th of May 1950 got permission from the House to print a report of the committee's visit to Bakersfield. That report appeared in the Congressional Record and the next day it was on the wires all over the country. A statement was issued by the DiGiorgio Corporation in San Francisco that the subcommittee had filed a report, that it was an official report and it said all these things about the union, that officers were a bunch of crooks, that they had embezzled thousands of dollars, that they had published this libelous film and so on and so on. It was a very vicious statement. I never read a denunciation of a union like that one. Everybody believed it. Our friends in the labor movement believed it. And that was the beginning of the end of the strike. We had to call it off two weeks after that. We had very little support financially from the labor movement, but what little was coming in was cut off and our president, Mr. Mitchell, decided we had to call off the pickets. And there were several hundred former employees of the DiGiorgio farms that had been fired. They had to leave Arvin and Lamont.

Galarza: Now, the union didn't fold until 1960, but the beginning of the end was in May, 1950. That report was of very great interest to me because I was at the hearings. I was one of the organizers of the union and on the picket line every day, and when the committee left Bakersfield myself and my union friends were convinced that was the end of it. There would be no report because we had talked to the chairman and he said, "All this is nonsense."

But there was a report and I didn't know how it got there, but I started checking, and from 1950 to 1965 I tracked down the history of that report. To make a long story short, what I found out was that that report had been typed in the offices of DiGiorgio, San Francisco, had been sent to Werdel in Washington who took it to Nixon and to Steed and to Thruston Morton and asked them to sign it. Nixon read it and signed it as a genuine report.

Question: Did the chairman sign it?

Galarza: No, no, the chairman had nothing to do with it. It got in as an official statement in the Record. You know what the rule of the House is: a representative can ask unanimous consent to put in a recipe for blueberry pie, so it's printed ... Congressmen get into habit of getting up and saying, "I ask unanimous consent to extend my remarks." Nobody protests; they all do it. So it goes into the Record. And then when it's reprinted, as this report was, on the single sheet with the letterhead of the Congress, the seal of the United States of America, you hand it out to newspapermen and to them it's official. So the next time somebody hands you an official report of the House of Representatives, look on the back side.

So the chairman did not have to--he was surprised. The first thing we did the day after it appeared, we telephoned him from Bakersfield. Cleveland Bailey, his name was. He said, "I am shocked. There is no report. There was no meeting. We didn't even discuss it in committee."

Consequently, that led to the break-up of the strike.

Question: Could you explain the bracero program and the effect it had on your union?

Galarza: It was very simple. The state was flooded with braceros while we were on strike, and before the strike and after the strike. So everywhere we went we had to contend with these workers who were isolated, they were really in camps, we couldn't get to them. I lost track of the number of times I was thrown out of camp talking with braceros. Once I remember I was near Corcoran, the camp located about ten miles west of Corcoran. I went out to talk to

Galarza: the braceros; there were about three hundred in the camp. We were getting ready for a cotton strike. And it was my job to explain to people what we were doing. Because we didn't have any money even for bulletins, we couldn't publish pieces of paper. So I had to go personally.

When I got to this camp I had to walk clear around the camp to find the gate in the barbed wire fence. I waited till evening and walked in, contacted some of the men and told them the strike was coming and please don't pick cotton. That was about all the time I had till the camp director, the cop, came and told me to leave. Of course, I left.

So everywhere we went during those years there was more than enough manpower to do the work, particularly during those strikes. From 1948 to 1959 I participated in probably twenty strikes and always that was the problem. And if there were not enough braceros in the area to satisfy the growers that they had replacements, they would bring them in from Mexico. After the strike started, with permission from the Department of Labor, they had no trouble getting permits for braceros.

So my answer to your question is that all during those years, the thirteen years that I was in the fields, the first thing we had to face was the presence of braceros. They were inaccessible, kept in the camps. The men were afraid to talk to you. If they were seen talking with you in town they were spotted and changed either to another part of the state or sent home to Mexico. So the survival of the union for ten years under those circumstances is something I've never been able to understand.

Braceros and Wetbacks; U.S.-Mexican Relations

Question: What was responsible for the bracero program being stopped?

Galarza: It was a long campaign. The whole strategy of our union was based upon three concepts. One, we had to bring about the termination of the bracero program. We figured it would take us ten years, and it did. Our view was that when that was accomplished that we next would have to undertake a similar campaign to bring to the attention of the country and to bring about legislation concerning the wetbacks. Our view was not to exclude the wetbacks. Our view was that the so-called wetback is a product of the political and social conditions of Mexico; and consequently we favored a campaign of publicity, confrontation, documentation, protest and so on that

Galarza: would zero in not on the wetback as a person, but on the Mexican government and its policy in Mexico that created such terrible poverty conditions that the wetback was a natural product of this burgeoning Mexican capitalism. That was our pitch.

Maybe that would take us ten years and at the end of that ten year stretch we then thought we could begin organizing farmworkers. Maybe fortunately or unfortunately, I don't know, the strategy of the union was cut off halfway. We never got to the wetback issue, not really. That brings us to 1960 and the union went down the drain.

I still believe that the way the wetback--the illegal--problem is handled in this country, particularly in this state, completely fails to focus on where the trouble really is. There are probably today 75,000 or 80,000 people who are here illegally working here; and they are here because Mexico is worse off today than in 1917, the year of the revolution. That's what produces poverty and that's what brings poor people here. So to close the border or to denounce the illegal or to continuously talk about the horrible conditions that he works under takes our mind off the main track.

Question: Poverty in Mexico and burgeoning capitalism; Mexico and U.S. related in their economies. Could you carry that thought through farther? Is it because of corporations in the U.S.?

Galarza: Not entirely. Let me go back a little ways. In 1952 I wrote a resolution for our union that was approved at our convention in New Orleans in which I proposed that our union enlist the support of the labor movement with appropriate lobbying and political pressure to create an international zone extending one hundred miles south of the border and one hundred miles north of the border and that in this zone both countries join to bring about changes, particularly in the matter of land tenure, so that these peasants and small town people in Mexico who were constantly trying to jump over the border could be stabilized. They would have employment and some kind of equity in the land and technical assistance too. We never got anywhere. The national unions, the AFL-CIO paid no attention.

The reason we worded the resolution is that I felt that the way things were going in 1950 in due course the Mexican economy would be so much like the American economy in terms of its control, ownerships, etc., that unless we started way back twenty-five years ago to build a different model to stabilize people in their communities and assure them the right to live on the land and give them the means and the instruction to be able to make a living in the land--the resources are there--that the trend that I could see in Mexican affairs would reach the point where there would be such

Galarza: a vast number of Mexicans for rent, for hire, that it would be impossible for farmworkers of this country, of this state, to make a living as farmworkers. That's what happened, and the Mexican economy has gone from a somewhat primitive capitalism to a full-blown capitalism.

Today if you look at the Mexican economy very closely, you find the usual characteristics. I would say that today not more than 35 percent of the industrial plant is in use. Three or four banks in Monterrey and another three or four in Mexico City control 90 percent of the bank business. What does that mean? It means that since the Mexican economy is so dependent on United States favors, nothing will happen in the way of labor policy in Mexico that will turn the country around and spread the wealth. Today there is more concentration of wealth in Mexico than there is in this country, and more than there was in 1910 when the revolution broke out. And looking into the immediate future I see no change. The Mexican dollar will depend entirely on the U.S. dollar. The Mexican dollar is stable because the American government is more than glad to pour credits into Mexico. Tracking these conditions in a wide circle, you always get back to the fact that the level of living in Mexico is so low that possibly three out of five Mexican adults are looking for opportunities to come to work in California.

Question: Is there any labor union movement in Mexico?

Galarza: As you look at the Mexican scene from the outside you can right away see ... there are craft unions, industrial unions, agricultural workers unions. The movement as it is today, though, is not at all what it was in 1916, 1917. You see, the labor movement in Mexico emerged as a part of the revolutionary struggle. It didn't emerge, as it did in this country, as a part of civil resistance--the emergence of trade unions--as a long, hard battle for collective bargaining. In Mexico it was the emergence of armed workers who participated in the armed struggle of the revolution and out of that came the trade unions. But in the last ten years the union has become part of the political machinery of the state; and so you see secretaries, presidents of unions are rewarded by seats in congress. They have these two heads, politicians and labor officials. To my knowledge the Mexican labor movement has never taken a straight trade-union stand on the problems of farmworkers who were migrating to this country. Never. They have made certain motions, but it has not been an effective position. So you go to Mexico and talk to these officials, as I did, in the hope that they would see that the Mexican working man was being pushed out of the country by extreme poverty; and that the trouble was in Mexico, but the trade union leaders didn't see it that way; so today there is not a definitive trade union movement in Mexico, but part of the official machinery of the state.

Organized Labor and the Power Structure

Question: What, who, cut off your organizing strategy?

Galarza: We had been in it, the union was out here since '46. The big strike was the DiGiorgio strike which started in October of '47 and the efforts to organize continued to the end of 1959. During those thirteen or fourteen years (to make a long story short), those ten years, '50 to '60, were years in which there was no hope we could organize farmworkers.

All we could do was to build our own knowledge of the bracero system and keep hitting at it till we could reach a stage where public opinion was so convinced that the arguments of growers was a fraud. And when that climate had been created we could then move into the lobbying stage in Washington and gain enough support from friends of the union and those who were seeing the truth and that only then could we hope to repeal the bracero law. That we did in '63 but our union was out of business in 1960; and we had to disband because we were not, from the point of view of the labor leadership in the U.S., an orthodox union. We were constantly stepping on the toes of growers and bankers and others who had their own understanding with certain other portions of the labor movement.

So we were a threat to the way in which power was put together in this state. And I never made any bones about it. I always said to our members and to whoever would listen to me that if our union lasted thirty years we would change the power structure of California. That was our goal. And this was by no means a part of the philosophy of organized labor in California. So we lost ground until 1960, and then we were faced with this dilemma. The State Federation of Labor had long cut off any financial support. I think at the top of our record the State Federation of Labor was giving us \$2500 a year.

We started out with four organizers in California. We each had areas of the state. And by 1955 we were down to one and that was myself. Now obviously with one organizer servicing seventeen locals from Mexicali to the Oregon border that's no labor movement. So part of the answer is that the growers wore us out. I was hospitalized for three months in 1959. I couldn't move. Just fatigue. The other reason was that by 1960 the leadership of the labor movement had made up its mind that we weren't a good bet. And so the word got around that we were inefficient. Here we'd been in the fields fifteen years and we had no contracts. We hadn't reduced any grower to terms. What kind of nonsense is this?

Galarza: All during those ten years I doubt that we were getting more than \$300 or \$400 a month from organized labor, but even so we had proved to be incompetent; and by 1959 the suggestion came down from Walter Reuther to us that the best thing for us to do was to turn in our charter and give it to the Packinghouse Workers. And I told Walter to go to hell.

My advice to our president was, give the charter back to me; and he can do what he wants with it but we're not going to be ordered by anybody. So by 1959 we were in the worst possible shape: no money, no organizers, no support and all these suggestions coming to us to get lost quick. So from September of '59 to May of 1960 the liquidation process just went fast.

The only thing that saved a smidgeon of the union was the offer the Butchers' Union made. They wanted our charter. It happened that the president of our union, H.L. Mitchell, had been a lifelong friend of the secretary-treasurer of the Butchers' Union, Pat Gorman, so on that basis Gorman offered to salvage what little there was left of the union, and the charter was transferred by Mitchell to the Butchers, and they've held it ever since. But just as soon as they got it, they invited me to go to Louisiana as an organizer because Mr. Meany didn't want me in California. And Mr. Gorman was not about to incur the anger of George Meany by keeping me here. So by the spring of 1960 I was in Louisiana.

Question: [inaudible]

Galarza: It's hard for me to say, for in the years I was talking about, it was part of my duty to shuttle; and the working time I spent in California I was on the road, and weekends and spare time I was in the East talking to the top people in the labor movement trying to enlist their support. So in those years I could give you a reasonably close answer as to what calculations those guys were making. I can't now.

I can only guess that probably--there is still something about the situation that was very clear to me in the 1950s and that was that to the extent the American labor movement and its leadership was becoming stuffed-shirt, straight business trade-unionism, that all the more they needed someone to be good to. And we were the favorite Christian charity of organized labor. Whenever the leaders in those days were hard-pressed to explain jurisdictional strikes and exorbitant wage demands and the tremendous differences in wage scales in California between, say, the engineers' union and the farmworkers, they could always point to these donations and they could always make speeches about us poor farmworkers who went around with wrinkled bellies. "We've been good to these people so we can't be that bad."

Galarza: And as a public relations asset, it was tremendous. We were the last remaining working joes to whom one could be kind.

Question: Teamsters?

Galarza: I can just refer you to what the Teamsters have said. Dan Tobin said it. Hoffa said it. Fitzsimmons has said it. Einar Mohn has said it through the years. It's a very simple answer. Our power rests with our contracts with the canneries, with the packing sheds. We're haulers, primarily, and we cannot let an independent union control the source of the produce we haul. It's that simple. I remember 1950 (we were working in Salinas). I asked that question. At that time it wasn't quite so clear. The Teamsters hadn't said this often enough for people to have really heard it. But when my union asked me to analyze the situation, that's what I said.

I said, "You don't have to speculate or theorize, all you have to do is look at the economic picture. The growers have contracts with the Teamsters to haul the produce; the workers are not organized; we're trying to organize them. As soon as we do you can just bet we're going to run into Teamster opposition because from their point of view they cannot let us control the farmworkers."

From 1949 to 1958, a long stretch, in spite of the weaknesses of our effort, we were able to stop production on a large scale by economic action in cotton, peaches, tomatoes, cantaloupes, lettuce, grapes. The stuff just didn't come out of the fields. That's economic action. And every time it happened we were sure to have a Teamster business agent on the spot to shoo in the drivers, to get them across our picket line. The Teamsters in 1949 and in 1974 cannot afford to let an independent union control conditions of production. And they're saying so. They're covering their [flanks?], that's all. And to the extent that they can persuade the growers that it's in their best interests to let them control the farmworkers, to that extent you will have sweetheart contracts.

Future of the United Farm Workers Union

Question: Can you venture a guess as to what lies in the future for the UFW?

Galarza: You know, I found out that every time I thought I was looking into a crystal ball, I was looking at the eight ball, and so my prophecies are not very useful. But I would say that, short of a very drastic political upheaval in this country and also short of a genuine and massive support from labor for these efforts, that the present farm

Galarza: labor union is a long way from consolidating its efforts. Mainly what is lacking is the committed support of labor. Be careful you don't measure that support in terms of dollars.

When I was a lobbyist in Washington, I discovered that the money the unions were giving the farmworkers was not the important thing: it was the lack of support in Washington. The labor movement for thirty years to my knowledge has had a very powerful lobby in Washington, very skilled guys. You should see them in action. They know how to work the Hill. There must be twenty-five or thirty of them on the payroll today and they know their oats. These people could swing votes in favor of farm labor legislation, but they won't do it. These are not their instructions. And until you see the AFL-CIO lobby operating in Washington, right on the spot, lining up votes for [inaudible] And clearly Chavez can't afford to maintain a lobby in Washington, to be on the spot the way the AFL-CIO is on the spot 360 days a year. An individual union can't do that, particularly the Farmworkers. They're lucky to have one lobbyist in Sacramento once in a while.

If the American labor movement were other than what it is, its commitment would be financial, it would be political, it would be legislative, it would be propagandistic. On all those levels labor would have to be active to turn the political machinery around so that farmworkers would get legislation. The labor movement isn't doing that.

For years Walter Reuther was the lady bountiful of our union. In the middle of a strike we could always count on him for two or three dozen bucks for soup kitchens. But this is not the labor movement as a whole.

Question: AFL-CIO support? Tainted with CIA connections?

Galarza: Chavez would not be asked to commit himself to such shenanigans. Taking money would not mean endorsement ... I would caution you against looking too deeply for motives in George Meany because he's not a deep man. All you have to do is to look at the labor leadership and how they operate and how you can predict what they will do in a given situation and that will give you a key to the man. So I would suspect that he is under pressure from some of these internationals. "Come on, George, fork over a couple of million for these poor farmworkers." And then at the next meeting of the executive council, he'll make a little speech about "Farmworkers Forever."

Question: Was AFL support responsible for contracts Farmworkers won back in 1970? How much did the AFL have to do with that? If the support wasn't there, how were they able to win those contracts?

Galarza: Oh, I can't answer that question. I'd have to be much better informed in detail about what happened from 1967 to 1971. But I can guess that, for one thing, the novelty of the boycott had a lot to do with it. You see, one thing you have to remember about power, whether it's trade union or power of the growers in California, if you are fighting that power you have a tendency to be overawed by the way it looks from the outside.

I remember in the cotton strike of 1952, there were three of us who organized that strike in Kern County, Tulare, Fresno, and Stanislaus. We were fighting a wage cut. I was at the northern end and I was able to see from day to day how it was going. During the first fifteen days or so, it was great. We were pulling workers out of the fields by the hundreds. We were caravaning. We were stopping the delivery of cotton to the gins. But I was partly responsible for financing that strike, so I had to watch all kinds of angles. I had to listen to the workers to see how their morale was going. And about two weeks into the strike I began to have a sense that this thing better be settled fast, because our pickets were running out of food. Some were pulling their families out of the area and moving off to Oregon, to Arizona. And as I was trying to weigh the chances of sweating it out (I had almost come to the conclusion that in two or three more days that strike would have to be called off), one grower down in the southern part of the Valley put the wage back where it was and as soon as the word got around, the contractors and growers started to settle. So technically we won the strike. But it was too damn close for comfort.

And the reason that we won that is that the growers were looking at what you might euphemistically call human power. We had these workers out and I imagine that the big shots, the cotton growers, said, "Well, my golly, we really underestimated these guys. They've been out for twenty days. They still look strong. The cotton isn't getting picked. Our contracts are in jeopardy. We better settle. We better restore the old wage."

That's the way we looked to them and I also recall situations in which we had the same feelings about the growers. We'd look at the DiGiorgio Corporation, "My God, who would ever think of attacking this monster? They will never break."

But we had them on the ropes for thirty months. And we broke for reasons that were completely unforeseen. One of them was Richard Nixon.

So when you look at power from the outside, remember that you're not looking at it from the back side. My guess would be that that original victory, the biggest that Chavez' union has had, partly was

Galarza: due to the fact that the growers, looking at the power of the union as outsiders, overestimated the economic strength of the union. And they settled because they had this boycott working very effectively. And I would guess they feared that if they challenged the union another year on this front that people would become so used to the idea of boycott, they'd be boycotting potatoes. They'd be starving in order to support the Farmworkers. That was a risk they wouldn't take. Now this is all speculation . . . based on experience we had.

Earlier Labor Gains

Question: Changes with Brown administration on farm labor interests?

Galarza: I had a lot to do with that situation and I can tell you that Pat Brown never gave us any such support. What happened was this. I took over the union in California right around 1953 or 1954. One of my goals was to destroy the Farm Placement Service. I used to say this at public meetings. So we made our preparations to destroy it and one of the things I had to do was to keep tabs on the deals that Ed Hayes and his crew made with the growers. It took us five years to accumulate the evidence, and when we had it there was nothing Pat Brown could do about it except to move in and cleanse the house before we cleaned it for him.

My goal was not to have Mr. Ed Hayes removed, that was the least of my concerns. My goal was to have the Farm Placement Service abolished. Pat saved the Farm Placement Service by firing Ed Hayes and disciplining a few of the farm placement guys who had been so indiscreet as to accept a crate of asparagus and take it home to the wife. This kind of stuff. Governor Brown had no choice. He couldn't condone these kinds of practices. And my view has always been that the dismissal of Ed Hayes and his lieutenants was a failure of the union. And the Farm Placement Service is in place today. It's still right there.

Question: Change of attitudes as far as union is concerned between those years and today?

Galarza: Oh, yes. The difference is as night is from day. To point out the contrast, during the melon strike, the second melon strike in the Imperial Valley which I helped to organize in 1952 or 1953: at the height of the strike we wanted public support in L.A. in order to stop authorization of bracero replacements. So it was my task to leave the strike and go to L.A. looking for an audience, looking for some people to talk to to tell them the story. Didn't find

Galarza: any. I telephoned friends, said, "Get to the newspapers. Do something." But an audience, ten people? Now today you have meetings like this all over the state. There's a big difference. The time wasn't ripe for these kind of groups to become aware of their role in the social struggle; it was twenty years too soon.

During the tomato strike, I had to organize that myself in Tracy in 1953: we had about eighteen hundred tomato pickers and their families out on strike and about fifteen days in the strike, I needed market information, went to Giannini Foundation in Berkeley. Found a tomato specialist and asked for marketing reports on tomatoes and day's ticker report. "I don't know what you're talking about," and all he had to do was to reach over and pick up some pieces of paper in his files. Today your farm labor union knows where to get this information. You have people who are doing market research for Chavez, and there are no mysteries that he can't solve by telephone. This is a big difference. And I could go on showing you by contrast how much more capable farmworkers are to do battle on all of these fronts. And I don't think that is going to diminish.

Question: Role of volunteers?

Galarza: We had just begun to get volunteers when we folded. In the late fifties people were just beginning to hear about conditions in the fields. This is beginning to sound like a hard luck story, isn't it?

Let me back up ten years before we came in, and those were the days when it wasn't a question of knowing somebody at the University of California, or talking to some people in Los Angeles; those were the days when the big question was, can I as an organizer go into Fresno and come out alive? Talking with Pat Chambers, he was doubtful about what the hell good he did. He was a farm-labor organizer back in the thirties. He spent three years in the penitentiary, convicted under criminal syndicalism laws. So I thought Pat was a little depressed about what had his life meant, anyway.

And I told Pat, "If you hadn't been in the Imperial Valley ten years before I was, I wouldn't have been in the Imperial Valley at all."

So you have to keep these things in mind. This present turn in farm labor organizing is a very long link in a much longer chain. And that's the way you have to look at it. To me one of the great men in farm labor history is Pat Chambers. He doesn't think so, but I do.

Galarza: And so we move in after these--for fifteen years Pat Chambers and Caroline Decker and those people took the rap and went to jail and were under continuous assault and so on. It was those ten years that from one point of view could be regarded as a total loss, because when they were incarcerated and did time there weren't any contracts in the fields, there were no locals, there were no unions, there were no sympathizers of unions, there were no boycotts --so that if you look at their careers in labor organizing from the standpoint of product, they were a total and dismal failure. But what did they do? For ten long years their struggle brought to the attention of the country the fact that rural California was a place in which there was no free speech: there were no civil liberties in rural California and the main victims were Okies, the Mexicans, and the blacks. That's all they did. So when we came on the scene in the late forties, the growers' associations were by no means the ferocious things that they had been ten years before.

We could hold meetings in Fresno, where Pat had had to sneak around alleys to get a few guys together. So, as our work was made possible by Chambers, my feeling is that Cesar's work is made possible by the apparently insipid record that we accumulated during those fifteen years. The question is, what will be the legacy of the Delano movement, looking forward into the future of our country? Answer: Victory!

III STUDENT'S RESPONSIBILITIES TO THE CHICANO COMMUNITY
 [Talk to UC Berkeley Chicano Studies Students]*

[Date of Recording: April 20, 1977]##

Chabran: I first met Ernesto Galarza back in the sixties when I was seriously thinking about going to graduate school after I became disillusioned with law school and the process of being a lawyer and those kinds of questions entered my mind. Ernesto Galarza, to my mind, was the model or the example that myself and many other Chicanos at that time were looking toward in terms of getting into the university and beginning to do the kind of research that was, we thought, very necessary in the Chicano community.

I first heard about his politics when there was a case in Bolivia when the miners in Bolivia were en masse murdered by the dictator at that time--back in '52, and Ernesto Galarza, who received his PhD from Columbia University back in the thirties, I believe, as a protest to this act returned his PhD to the university that he was a part of to show solidarity with the working class in Bolivia. The president of Columbia [University], as I remember, had bestowed upon the military dictator of Bolivia an honorary degree of sorts, and Ernie got bent out of shape and I think rightly so for that. I think that speaks a lot about Ernie's politics in terms of where he stands. In terms of what he has contributed, there are several books and articles that are too numerous for me to take time out and mention here, but his most noted works have been The Merchants of Labor, Spiders in the House and Workers in the Fields, Strangers in Our Fields, Barrio Boy. More recently he has produced another book entitled Farm Workers and Agribusiness in California, 1947-1960.

*Ricardo Chabran, Director, Chicano Studies Program. Dr. Galarza's remarks were recorded during a talk to UC Berkeley Chicano Studies students, April 20, 1977.

Chabran: He is currently teaching a course on bilingual education at Santa Cruz, for which he's gotten into a lot of trouble recently. It turns out that his class has been able to expose a lot of, you might say, negative aspects of the bilingual education enterprise in the San Jose area and for that reason, he's being put against the wall by people in San Jose. Maybe he can talk a little bit about that in terms of the community action research that he is involved with there. He was born in Tepic, Nayarit, Mexico; received his BA at Occidental College, his MA at Stanford University, and as I mentioned before, his PhD at Columbia University. He served for a time after getting his PhD as chief of the Division of Labor and Social Information for the Pan-American Union, was the director of research and education for the National Agricultural Union, AFL-CIO--that was just before the Farm Workers Union was organized later on. His main interests are bilingual education, farm labor, and urban studies. Without further ado, I'm very pleased to present him to you as of now. [applause]

Galarza as University Student

Galarza: I'm awfully glad you mentioned "as of now" because there's always a temptation in meeting a group like this by a person like myself to lean back on the past and elaborate and embroider and maybe even invent some of the good things that one has participated in. The subject or theme that I was asked to think about out loud this morning is the role of the Chicano graduate student on campus and in society. Such a subject, as of now, is of extreme importance to all of us in this room because, as I see it, the prospects of intellectual development and of developing professional competence and of acceptance by the academic institutions and of the opportunities for maintaining a connection between the scholar and, for want of a better phrase, the people who are outside the campus --all of these depend on the circumstances of a particular time. So I want to go back to my early days without falling back into what I just said about reminiscing.

I want to go back to just a little thought of my own experience because from it we can get an orientation and approach the present and see it more critically and more objectively. The Chicano students that I knew in the thirties at Columbia and elsewhere were very few in number. At Columbia University I didn't know another graduate student in the department of history or political science or public law, which is where I did my work. Neither were there many of us in the undergraduate institutions in southern California where I went to college at Occidental. I remember, I think it was in 1925, out of sheer curiosity I inquired among my friends at UCLA, USC, Pomona, Whittier and all of that

Galarza: cluster of colleges in the south, and I could only identify six of us in all of those places. Of course, possibly that wasn't a good count because even then there were some Chicanos who had already given up their identity. They had become anything but Mexicans. In those days, we didn't talk about Chicanos. You were either a Mexicano or you were not. I identified myself as a Mexicano by birth and identity, so I looked for other Mexicanos. They were awfully hard to find. I remember only one at UCLA that was in the open, identifiable. He looked like a Mexicano, he talked like one.

Six out of how many thousands of students at that time in southern California was not a very commanding figure. That had an effect. I'm going back to the late twenties, thirties, and maybe early forties. That had an effect on the student himself in that we were a sort of novelty. I was a curiosity on the Occidental campus. I was a Mexicano. Those students--aside possibly from the few who had stumbled into a Mexican here or there--didn't know what a Mexican looked like or what to expect of him. So there was really a favorable atmosphere at Occidental for me as a Mexicano. I didn't notice any condescension that I can recall. The professors of the courses I took were not soft on me. But I had a feeling of hospitality on that campus. The very fact that I was in a small school made it possible for me to become fairly well acquainted during those three and a half years that I was there with people like English professor Dr. Stelter, sociology professor Dr. Day. I talked with these men and women during that time, and I began to feel that there was real communication between myself, as a Mexicano, and this faculty.

Feeling that way, feeling at home on a campus, made of course an enormous difference to me because I had just about not gone to college. During the last weeks of my senior year in high school I was already shopping around for a job in the canneries. I had a tentative offer lined up at Libby-McNeil out on 31st and B [street] to start that July. That was going to be my life. But Ralph Everett, the instructor in political science at Sacramento High School, casually took me aside one day and asked me what I intended to do in the fall. I said I was going to work in the cannery.

He said, "Well, why don't you consider going on to college?" which was an amazing idea to me.

I said, "I don't have the money and I don't know anybody. I don't know anyone at college. I have no friend anywhere."

So he said, "Well, don't go to work in the cannery for keeps. Take a summer job, but don't plan to stay there." In the summer-time this man got busy. He wrote to some people down in Occidental

Galarza: College; and one thing and another, I was in Occidental that fall. If these things happen to you, you begin to feel that there's something ahead for you, that you are being helped by friends. So the academic world begins to be a human world right off because those with whom you are dealing, who are helping you shape your plans are human people--warm, responsive people. This is an important consideration to keep in mind because if you are living at a time when these values are important and they are expressed to you by your instructors, they contribute mightily to your spirit, your frame of mind, your hopes, and your determination to do whatever needs doing to make a success of your academic career. So that's one factor. The period that you're living in and the kinds of people you are dealing with in academia.

Maintaining Contacts with One's Origins

Galarza: But the second important factor, I think, is what kinds of connections do you maintain with the community from which you come. And in this respect, again, I was exceedingly fortunate--I think, I know. Being at a small college and working continuously through the school year and having to go back to my work--my bread and butter work that I was used to, farm work and working in the cannery and so forth--I spent all of my summers in Sacramento living with my folks and working with them, turning over my wages to them to keep the family together. So during those four years I was brought back to and immersed in the connections, the contacts, the feelings and the problems of the Mexican community in Sacramento. This continued for four years. How important this is in my own thinking came to me very forcibly after I had been at Columbia for three or four years. I began to be disturbed by the lack of news from home. My family and my friends back in Sacramento were not writers. They didn't know, many of them, how to write. They had not entered that stage of understanding in which a man writes letters or receives them as a part of his continuing connections with the world in which he's living, even though those connections are distant. When I realized after my third or fourth year back in the east that this was happening to me, I became very disturbed. And while we stayed in the east another six years, that feeling never left me--that what was happening back in California in all the towns that I knew and where I had worked, I was not keeping abreast of.

This may be a second thing to keep in mind when you ask yourself what is the role of the Chicano graduate student in this university, on this campus, and in this society today. What is the quality, the nature of the connection that you maintain regularly with the

Galarza: community from which you came. And it's awfully easy to drift into a new world. It might not be as pleasant and hospitable as you'd like, but there's always an attraction and a charm about a new universe into which you have moved from another one that you've been in that tends to take up most of your time. Your thinking patterns change; you don't see the same people, and the day-to-day experience that should be always a reminder of where you've been and where you are and where you want to go begins to disappear.

But the third factor that we have to consider in addressing the question that we're talking about this morning is, what times are you living in? Nothing could be more dramatically and drastically different with respect to the times, the society, the events, the values than the 1930s when I was a graduate student and the 1970s when you are graduate students. What has happened in the meantime? What has happened to the Mexicans of whom we are all descendants? It's important, for instance, to note that one of the indicators of change is in what we're called. We were not called Chicanos in the thirties and forties. I happened to know the name in a scholarly sort of way. But on campus we were not Chicanos, we were Mexicans. The barrios were not Chicano barrios, they were Mexican barrios. So there's even been a change in the name, the nomenclature, in how we are called. But much deeper changes have happened. For one thing, the Mexicano, the Mexican minority, has at long last begun to suffer in a very serious way at the consequences of compulsory mobility.

I didn't have an appreciation of what mobility does to people--to families and to individuals--until I came back to California to work with the National Farm Labor Union. And then I saw at first hand how people, farmworkers especially, strive for stability. The Mexican families particularly sought out a place where they could have steady work and where they could establish community, kinship of some sort. So I began to see up and down the state of California these little clusters of communities--"colonias," they were called. Some were very small, not more than twenty-five or thirty people; others were quite large, as the Bakersfield or the Imperial Valley colonias. This is where people began to drift and settle down out of this continuous turmoil of mobility. They came back and spent the winter season living a community life that sort of recharged them and gave them the comfort of kinship and of family connections and of communities and of neighborhoods.

Compulsory Mobility: the Bracero Program

Galarza: The major change that I saw in the middle fifties and the early sixties was the intensification of mobility by compulsion. Before that, in the two decades preceding, say, 1945, there was a lot of mobility but it was more of a voluntary type. You moved from Imperial Valley to Coachella, from Coachella to the San Fernando Valley and from there to Bakersfield and from Bakersfield to Sacramento--these moves were made voluntarily by families that were getting used to the Californias, and as they learned the ways of American rural society, seeking better and more comfortable accomodation. But it was mainly a voluntary kind of thing. And before a move of that kind was made, there was a great deal of thought given to it--much family talk. Very often the thing that decided it was that you had a cousin or a brother somewhere up in northern California, and he knew the ropes, let's say, in the Salinas Valley. So the decision was made to move to Soledad because you had a cousin or a brother in the area. And it was this kind of slow, developing anchorage that the people were seeking and around which community life was stabilized. But in the middle of the 1940s and on through the fifties and sixties, the choice was no longer voluntary. It was compulsory. And it began in force and in power with the establishment of the bracero program in 1942. That program lasted until 1964--twenty-two years.

There are many interesting matters to study about the bracero program. But I think the fundamental one is under the concept of mobility. In 1942 a program was created between the government of Mexico and of the United States, initially for the sole purpose of providing emergency manpower in the United States. Mexican citizens came to work on the railroads and in agriculture in order to provide economic input into the society. It was being drained of manpower to fight foreign war. That's the way it started. In the course of time, the people who negotiated these agreements--the employers and the governments--realized that this was something extraordinarily good for them.

There were all kinds of possibilities in the bracero program that were not initially thought of--different ways of exploiting people, different ways of contorting them into a controlled labor force. In time, for instance, it was discovered that all the contracting could be done by the American government directly with the Mexican government; but once the men were recruited--and we're talking hundreds of thousands of men in the course of time--once they were hired and their names were stamped on the contract, they were then turned over to the growers' associations of California, and there were some twenty of them. The Growers' Association of San Joaquin Valley, for instance, based in Stockton, was the actual

Galarza: agent for organizing and allocating and controlling the thousands of Chicanos who came who were sent to the Central Valley, to San Joaquin year after year. That meant that a large group of Mexican citizens were turned over as workers for an association--but all sorts of other things followed. I can only mention one, which to me is typical of the whole process. The bracero, let's say, assigned to work in a Tracy camp, was assigned to that camp, and the area within which he might move freely was restricted to the Tracy area. If he was found over in San Jose wandering around and his document did not indicate that he had a right to be in the San Jose area, he was out of bounds and the migara [Immigration Service] could pick him up and he might lose his contract. What did that mean? It meant that the area and the scope of freedom of an individual was being cut down. If you were a bracero, the area within which you could freely and voluntarily move was the area controlled by your association. And from that discovery, all sorts of other things flowed. By 1955 or 1956, we can say that there were in California at the peak of the harvest some 60,000 or 70,000 braceros who were, to all intents and all practical purposes, a conscript army of workers. And, of course, you know already if you've done any reading, what happened to wages, what happened to housing, and so on.

So we now come back to the point that the Mexican communities, like San Jose where some 60,000 persons of Mexican ancestry live, those people are now, after twenty years, still under the tremendous pressure of compulsory mobility. Keep your mind on that because from that fact flow all sorts of important consequences as to the structure of the Mexican community and what problems that community is having to keep itself together.

These are the three important considerations that I think you should keep in mind when you ask yourselves what is the role of the Chicano scholar, the Chicano graduate student, today on a campus like this one: your own personal experience, your continuing contact with the community from which you come, and the tone or the mood of the society in which you're living. I would say that today this campus, like all other campuses that I know of, are moving very rapidly into a period of response to pressures that tend to constrict our liberties more and more. Included among those liberties, of course, is the prime liberty of all--the liberty to think, the freedom to investigate, the right to go wherever your mind leads you as an inquiring person.

Limitations of the Academic Environment: Problems of Graduate Research

Galarza: In the years I have lived in this country as a student, and as a teacher, I can think of no period during which the constraint and the pressure upon the freedom to choose your area of interest, the

Galarza: right to pursue it wherever it will take you, was ever more restricted than it is today. I'm going to give you one example of that toward the close of my remarks, but I'll save that as an illustration.

Besides these considerations, we have to take a closer look at the academic world itself. I guess I have taught in a half a dozen universities in California. I'm now teaching a course in the politics of bilingual education at UC Santa Cruz. So I've had an opportunity--really I'm something of an intellectual migrant--to look at the establishment in all of these places. At first I wasn't aware that I was a professional intellectual migrant, and really the circumstance that forced me not to seek permanent tenure or a permanent niche on one of these campuses was not so much because I understood the process of academia but because the circumstances of my personal life were such that I just couldn't sink roots on any campus. But those circumstances gradually led me to look at the establishment in which I was working temporarily with a much more critical eye, and gradually I developed an attitude. And the attitude, which I expressed to a couple of my colleagues at Santa Cruz, was this: I am there temporarily filling a slot, holding it for another person who will be coming in the fall as a permanent faculty member. And the talk was whether or not I would consider applying myself for that slot. It pays well, tenure to start with, nice campus, a maximum of maybe two courses a week, two lectures a week. I said no. They asked, "What is your reason?" My answer was maybe a little disrespectful, but I meant it.

I said, "If I stay here much longer than three quarters I'll feel that I am sinking roots into a cemetery." I really mean that. The intellectual fervor at that campus, the ferment of ideas and that kind of recklessness that comes early in your life when you discover the possibilities of following an idea through and down and over until you are on top of it and can speak about it with authority and with honesty--that is going on in the Santa Cruz campus, not among the faculty, but among the students. So if I could invent some way by which I could maintain my relationship with the students and take them off campus with me a couple of times a week and do things in the community, I'd accept that job. But those weren't the terms which I was offered. So I'm again about to move my tent to some other campus.

Continuing to look at academia, I also see this, and this element wasn't present back in the thirties. Maybe it was a fortunate thing that at Columbia we did not have a Chicano faculty with tenure. I didn't have to contend with an inside critic who kept demanding that my dissertation should be about La Rouchefoucauld and how he dealt with the political parties of seventeenth century France. That didn't interest me. My master was a great teacher. His name was William Shephard. When I went to him at the end of my second

Galarza: graduate year there to settle upon a dissertation, Dr. Shephard--not a Chicano scholar, a man of very disciplined tradition--I had to write my dissertation for him four times before he accepted it. Dr. Shephard said, "Well, what do you want to do for your dissertation?" So that afternoon, in the twilight of his office there at Fairweather Hall, I'll bet we spent three hours talking about my choice. We got into a talk about my native country, Mexico, and what had happened to Mexico in the last 300 years and what was going to happen to Mexico in the next 100 years, and what was my special interest in going back to Mexico.

##

Galarza: I said I would pick one industry in Mexico and find out--remember, this was back in the late thirties--I would select one industry that showed promise, that seemed to be developing in Mexico along the pattern of modern industrial organization; in other words, one industry in which I can isolate and observe the capitalist process of production getting started in Mexico. Dr. Shephard thought that was fine and asked for an outline. I slaved on that for a summer until he finally approved it.

After that, I was on my own. I spent two years traveling, off and on, in Mexico. My subject was La Industria Electrica en Mexico, how did it get started? Here we're dealing with the question of power, mechanical power. Clearly, if the history of western industrialism told us anything, Mexico, in order to become industrialized, would have to develop a power base, an industry that would provide you with power. I noticed in reading and traveling around the country--because this was not to be read anywhere--I noticed that there was a lot of talk about potencia hidroelectrica, hydroelectric power plants. I thought, "Well, maybe this is my cue." So I travelled around visiting distant places, riding on mule-back off to some ravine where they were building one of these small power plants. And gradually my thesis began to take shape. Here were the roots of an industry, and my task was to find out specifically and concretely and scientifically where it was happening and why. That became my thesis, called La Industria Electrica en Mexico.* It took me four years to write it and complete the research. But the point I'm making is that on that faculty, fortunately there were no Chicano intellectuals who had found secure anchorage in the academic world and told me "No, that's not real history. What you have to do is to go to Western Europe and select a subject."

*Fonda de cultura económica, Mexico [1941]. Copy in The Bancroft Library.

Galarza: For instance, Dr. Shephard, who was of Germanic ancestry, could have said, "Why don't you study the politics of Denmark? Fascinating country."

Now, the difference today is--as I've seen it--that there are on these campuses--I can't name anyone because I've got to live here, but I could name you Chicano scholars on other campuses who are tenured, who are secure, and who say that very thing to a graduate student. "If you're a political scientist, write your dissertation on the Swiss Federation. Great stuff. And if you do that, there's lots of literature here and I'll be glad to help you along. But the Swiss Federation could be of very great technical interest to you." But it has not a damn thing to do with what's going on in California today! Now that is a great difference.

One of my problems as I sit and work in San Jose is that I have become an unpaid consultant to a half a dozen universities. Time and again, some Chicano scholar will call me, a young scholar, to ask me if he can come down and talk to me. "Sure, come on down." So we spend an evening or an afternoon, and invariably the question is, the problem is, "I want to do a dissertation on--" for instance, in the area of economics, the question that is posed by the student is, "What happened to the first land workers who came from Mexico, and why were they never able to get roots in California agriculture, or in Texas or in Arizona?" Instead of developing a class of propertied land workers, they slipped back into the class of proletarians, agrarian proletarians. To examine that in California was the interest of one of the students.

But he said, "I can't do that. My first problem is that I can't find a committee of three that knows anything about the subject. My second problem is that they tell me that there are no research sources, so they can't tell me where to go to find my material. And the third problem is that when it comes to defending my dissertation, the committee will be hostile. They don't know anything about the subject. I've already sounded them out and they've said it's a waste of my time. You can spend fifty years working on this subject and you couldn't finish it then." So most of the students that have been coming to me for the last ten years have given up, have abandoned the idea of doing any research that interests them and has some relationship to the community, to California, or the southwest. A few hang on. But if they hang on they run into a different set of problems. Those problems have to do with the Chicano experience of the sixties. That experience brought to a peak all sorts of awarenesses, one of them being the role of the university, the role of the campus Chicano, in the affairs of the community.

Galarza: I have had this experience at San Jose State University. I taught one seminar in the School of Social Work for two semesters. We began by a discussion of theoretical foundations of community organization, and we ended by my seminar being discontinued because during the middle of the year we split up into teams to examine what was going on in the various barrios of San Jose. We assigned ourselves tasks of very serious, hard research to find out what was going on. So that seminar was not cancelled, it was not suppressed, it was not discontinued, it just fumore--it disappeared as so much smoke or fog.

You Chicano scholars who are here now today must recognize this drastic change on the American campus, and begin to ask yourselves, must we abandon what's here for us? This campus contains immeasurable treasures for all of us. Here is an accumulation of experience that should be open to us for each one of us to analyze and evaluate and put to our own uses. And you can't get it off campus--these magnificent libraries and research facilities. These are public facilities. This is public wealth organized and set up here for your use. Please think very carefully before you abandon this place because of certain difficulties that you're having. The thing to remember is that the training, the capability in the law, in sociology, in whatever these disciplines may be called, is available only here. Unfortunately, it is under the control, under the vigilance of people who don't share your motivation. But that is no reason why you should abandon your claim to these resources. You do have a claim to them.

The point of view that I'm asking you to consider, of course, is not an easy one to carry out. One of the difficulties that we as Chicanos and Mexicans have always faced is that our universe in the university is so unfamiliar and so distant from the community from which we come. It's awfully hard to explain to your families and to your neighbors--neighborhoods that are constantly in turmoil and in the process of change--what it is you're up to, what you're doing, what your difficulties are. There's a gradual alienation between us on campuses and those in the community. I contend that the solution or the effort to overcome that alienation is ours and not the community's. We understand what causes it. We know why we are victimized by it. We know why the community itself is victimized. But you cannot ask a person who has not had your opportunities to become mentally critical and professionally competent to dig at, to go at the fact that you need to establish a thesis.

Scholarship in the Field: Finding Farm Labor and Bilingual Education Data

Galarza: I'm often asked about these books that I have written, how long it took me to do them. I'll tell you how long it took. Spiders in the House,* the research on that began in 1952 and ended in 1974. This book that is to be published by the Notre Dame University Press, Farm Workers and Agribusiness in California, 1947-1960, [1977], the research began in 1947 and it ended two years ago. If you want to compare the discipline, the persistence, the diligence that's required to do a piece of research in the field of social science, you will find that if your subject is important--more than that, if it's vital--and if it does not fit in the mood of these times and these days, it's going to take you a long time to do it. You have to determine that it is an important subject. To me, this was an important subject, and after twenty-two years of researching it, I wrote it. And it was important to me because the structure of California politics and its very society have been molded by agribusiness. You can't touch any part of California society that you don't put your finger on some aspect of this structure of power. I thought it was important. My own satisfaction, my own curiosity was being driven to get that answer, and I think I have a part of it here. But only a part of it.

I want you people in this room to remember as graduate students that when you read the table of contents of this book, it's really an outline for your research. There are some forty-five important topics in this table of contents. I have dealt with each one of those, first because it was important to my story; but secondly because I wanted to put enough facts into that particular section so that others might come along and say, "Look, this is not the complete story. There's a lot that he's left out of here. Where is the rest of it?" That's what I'm hoping this book will be--a directory, a guide, a list, a topical list of the research that needs to be done to tell us what's happened to us in the last fifty years in California. The time that it takes you to do a research job in whatever discipline is only one of the difficulties. Where are the materials? Where do you get the data in these areas of our social experience that nobody has bothered to look at before?

*Spiders in the House and Workers in the Field, University of Notre Dame Press, 1970.

Galarza: I happen to think that this is precisely the aspect that brings out the best possible qualities of scholarship. I've been told so many times that there is no information on this, but my response is, if it happened in human experience somewhere there must be some evidence of it. And if I've got to go out myself and look at it, eyeball to eyeball, that's what I'll do. As time goes on you'll find that the pieces begin to fall together. You find evidence in the most extraordinary places. One of the best documents in this book is a memorandum that I found in the wastebasket of a farm labor placement officer in Modesto. He was receiving every week a pile of stuff from the central office in San Francisco, and he'd look at it and throw it in the wastebasket. One day I was visiting him to help with a bit of trouble he was having and the conversation brought us to the wastebasket. [laughter]

He said, "I've just thrown away a document that maybe helps me understand what's happening." He had been canned by the regional director of the Bureau of Employment Security because he had been enforcing the bracero law. Probably the only enforcement officer in California who was doing it. And for that, he was canned. In his wastebasket were some routine papers about his job.

So I said, "Well, let me look at them." We turned the wastebasket upside down on a table and I ploughed through that, and there was one document--some twelve pages--entitled "Minutes of the Regional Farm Labor Operations Committee." Never heard of it before. I said, "Bill, what is this?" He said, "Oh, that's some outfit that meets now and then. They have dinner and talk about a lot of things. These are their minutes." I said, "Well, let me have it. Damé. Aca."

I read that document that night, and I discovered that there was in California at that time a kitchen cabinet of about twenty agribusinessmen and politicians who met every two or three months with the top officer of the Department of Labor here in San Francisco or in Sacramento or elsewhere, and that is where bracero policy was made. In those minutes there was a statement from the director of the regional office and the [U.S.] Department of Labor promising --whether he did that on his knees or not, I don't know--but he promised at that meeting that he would never issue a regulation before clearing it with the presidents and the officers of the Associated Farmers and the local associations. Now, that was Minutes #7. They'd had six meetings before, and maybe they'd had another three or four afterwards. So I wrote Mr. Brockway in San Francisco asking for a set of all the minutes. "Minutes of what? Minutes of what? Don't know what you're talking about." So I started a pilgrimage around the state of California, emptying wastebaskets. [laughter] By the time I got through, I had all the minutes, the complete set. And if any of you ever want to go

Galarza: into this special feature, go to the Stanford Library and ask for the minutes of the RFLOAC. And you will be able to expand this chapter and point out things which I have no knowledge of because I didn't follow them up.

So, not only are you faced with a special situation, an atmosphere, on your campus, a faculty that feels ignorant in your area or the area you want to tackle, a faculty that does not respond as Dr. Shephard responded to me--the first thing he said was, "I don't know anything about the subject." Of course not. He was a specialist in Western European history. He went to Mexico occasionally as a tourist. But he said, "Fine. Maybe you can come back and tell us something about the coming changes of Mexico that we here on the campus have no time or interest to go into." Well, I have to now say something about the contemporary scene. As I have indicated, I have been teaching this course at UC Santa Cruz, and I call it the Politics of Bilingual Education. The title itself is the result of discussions I had with students who told me that they wanted a course, not on the methodology of bilingual education, not on the philosophy, not on linguistics, but they wanted me to help them understand the undercurrents, the underpinnings in politics of the bilingual program that is now operating in some eleven western states. So we set up the course in that fashion.

Our first problem was we had no textbook. To me, that's invariably a plus sign. What, no textbook? Fine. [laughter] We agreed that the textbook we would use would be xerox copies of the file that I had been accumulating on bilingual education in the United States during the last eight or ten years. I'd pick up little papelitos here and there, and sometimes when I was in an angry mood I'd write off a letter to the Secretary of HEW and he would respond or wouldn't respond. I would visit classrooms, I would teach little kids, and all of this began to form a kind of an archivo on bilingual education. So I proposed to the students that, if they agreed to take a course without a textbook, that we could make those documents our text. So, every time we met I handed out three or four of those documents and every student got a set. At the end of the course, each of them had from sixty to seventy documents--originals, unpublished, some of them signed by very important people in Washington. Out of this we formed our discussions and took a reading of the philosophical and political and social underpinnings--those things that you don't see at first glance--in bilingual education.

We reached the middle of the second quarter and then I proposed to the students that, instead of taking an examination they do a paper based upon field research in San Jose. They paired off in teams, and I gave them names and places and situations that they could investigate. They started going over to San Jose to set up

Galarza: up interviews and to visit schools and look at documents and ask for documents. I rather suspected what these students would be up against, but I didn't tell them.

I said, "You'll have difficulties and all I can promise you is that I'll stand by to help you with those difficulties." And it had to happen. Students would go over the hill to San Jose from Santa Cruz to keep an appointment, and the administrator wouldn't be there. Or they would ask for a set of documents or a document, and the documents were lost or being bound. You know that old gag --they're at the bindery. They're being bound. So we spend about eight weeks in this culminating part of the course. The research papers were written and turned in, but there was an interesting interlude.

As soon as the students began to go over there with these questions in hand, strictly on their own, finding out first hand what it is to research in an area of this sort, the resistance began to go higher and higher until it reached the superintendency of the district, who is also the chairman of the Bilingual Consortium of ten districts in Santa Clara County. The opposition became open. In one case, one of my students was roundly scolded. The person he went to see was offended, because he had shown up at the office with this questionnaire. But the research papers were written, and besides, they had been written not for me, not for the university, but for something called the Community Organization to Monitor Education in San Jose. We called it COME for short. [laughter] COME is an organization of about fifty families in ten different districts, parents who kept bringing these problems forward about bilingual education. For instance, they could not understand why if anybody asked for information downtown, they were not given the information. They were turned away. They couldn't understand why, for instance, the Office of Education, which is presently directed by a type by the name of Juan Bolina, was unresponsive to their letters and their complaints and their requests.

Community Action Formula: Research, Action, and Legal Advocacy

Galarza: So COME was organized by some of us and we began then on a different strategy. We offered the students a base in the community. They would do the research for COME through me, and COME would make these papers available to the community. We started publishing "Temas Escolares." "Temas Escolares" is a summary of the fiscal data which we've been able to get on the operation of the Consortium. How did we get that data? The students were not able to get it.

Galarza: But COMÉ, through its officers, filed a suit against the superintendent of schools and brought him to court and made him give. And he did. We have all of the fiscal reports, the monthly fiscal reports for the Consortium for the last six months of 1976. We just published a summary of those. They show things like this: The Consortium is operating on a budget of over a million dollars, 32 percent of which goes for the salaries of administrators and administrators' assistants. Thirty-two percent. Now, we just print this stuff. We had to add, however, a third component, and maybe out of this you will see a pattern for yourselves.

We know from long experience that you may be ever so learned, so well-informed, and so well supported by the community, and yet you cannot budge the officers of these public programs, such as bilingual education. They simply will not give unless you take them to court. We don't have money for expensive lawsuits, but we did strike an agreement with the California Rural Legal Assistance program, and they are currently giving us counsel and advice and advocacy in the courts. So we have, then, this formula: a body of parents who have a vital interest themselves in their children in the schools; we have a group of students who undertake to do the necessary research on the subjects that are of interest to us in this area of bilingual education; and we have legal advocacy. That's where we are now.

And my final point is the response that we got from the institution. I want to read it to you. It seemed to our adversaries --because that's what they had become--that the place to disrupt this program, this coalition of students and citizens and lawyers, was on the university campus. Now, that was a smart decision. The administrators and the politicians of this program probably know from contacts that one of the softest spots in American society is the university. You put your finger on it and it gives. You push it a little more and it gives some more. That probably was the way they analyzed the situation. So a lady by the name of Mrs. Martinez, Olivia Martinez, wrote a letter to the Chancellor of the University of California at Santa Cruz on February 4, 1977. It's a letter of a page and a half, and I'll just give you the gist of it. She mentions the three of us who are conducting that seminar and winds up by saying that this seminar was nothing more than a political project, that our research had to do with political activities, and that the university was mispending public funds in allowing that thing to go on. To me the most significant phrase that this woman used was the following: "In this particular situation, no formal contact was made by the university to secure permission for this research to take place." I said to myself--no, I won't tell you what I said to myself. [laughter] I said it in Mexican. That, to me, was the peak experience over many, many years of dealing with academic establishments.

Galarza: Here was a political power telling the university to correct the situation. My answer is attached in a memorandum. I won't read that because I have made my point as to the nature of the attack. Attached also to these two documents is my address to Joseph W. Aragon, Special Assistant to the President, the White House, Washington. This, I will read because it rounds out the point. "Dear Mr. Aragon: An audacious form of academic censorship has been attempted by Ms. Olivia Martinez, Director of the San Jose Bilingual Consortium. Ms. Martinez's letter to Chancellor Taylor of the University of California at Santa Cruz is self-explanatory. A copy is attached for your information. My personal reply is also attached. But beyond personal views, I believe the case raises an important issue of public policy. The fiscal and bureaucratic base from which the Martinez attack was launched is a Title VII grant to the Consortium of more than a million dollars. The approving agency is the Office of Bilingual Education acting personally through Dr. Juan Bolina, Director. On the record, the grant has the explicit support of the Democratic administration. I do not know whether this brazen extrapolation of the grant in the Martinez letter was approved in advance by ranking Democrats. However, I have not seen any evidence that it was not."

This is the sort of capsule I want to put on my remarks because, in connection with what I've said before and rounding it out by reference again to the mood of the times in which you live, what connections you have with the community, what your own feeling about your intellectual caliber, your intellectual challenge, happens to be--I think all of this sums it up. We have in California today and in other states of the southwest a machine building, a machine devised and operated by Chicanos, some of the most eminent graduates of the last generation who have achieved positions of responsibility in the establishment, but in the process have lost their ties and responsiveness to their own Chicano community.

And this we have responded to by the process I have just described, which I suggest as a way in which you might proceed.

##

Galarza: I think this is the way it has to be done. To get yourselves thoroughly documented so that nobody knows more about the subject than you do; to transmit it to your students and participate with them in the process of wrenching this information, if necessary, from these institutions; to ally yourselves with people in your community to whom this is an important problem. What's happening is that we have a gigantic ripoff going on in this country called bilingual education, which is a sort of an underground siphon by which public funds are being diverted into school district budgets for other purposes, and not for the education of our schoolchildren. That is the situation as I see it.

Galarza: So, I'm leaving you with a formula which contains four elements. Yourself, your students, your community, and your Chicano attorneys. Put them together, and I think the time will come when you'll feel more hopeful about your impact on the life of your times. Thank you. [applause]

Student Questions

Chabran: Can we take about fifteen minutes of questions, Ernie?

Galarza: Sure.

Chabran: Who wants to ask the first one?

Question: You were going to mention an example of compulsory mobility. I'm not sure that I caught it, inasmuch as you wanted to end with that.

Galarza: Yes. Let's go back to the bracero system. When the braceros began to come in in numbers in the early 1940s, the Growers' Association very soon found out that by preferring the braceros to the domestic workers, they could control the wage system in such a way so that wage payments could be very drastically reduced. That proved to be a fact. Wherever braceros were hired, wages skidded. This cut the base from the local workers. That is to say, it deprived them of jobs. The displacement of the domestic worker by the bracero became a standard operating procedure.

I used to take crews of domestic workers all over California. I'd load them in my car and would take them to a farm or to the Farm Placement Service office to apply for work, and they would be turned away because they already had braceros hired. What does that mean? It meant that the wage earner of that family--the men and the women who worked in the fields--could no longer live in that community. Their job base was gone. So they would have to move away. I began to see ghost barrios, like Brawley and Calijuate and other towns that in the late 1940s began to be vacated. People were moving north seeking what they thought were better chances for work in the Salinas Valley or around Yuba City or the Sacramento Valley. Santa Clara Valley itself grew rapidly after this process started.

By mobility I mean the transfer of people from one area to another. We're now talking about the pressures that were brought to bear on these communities to make the people move. It became a very refined system. I remember once in Patterson, I received a telephone call from a farm labor family that was a member of our

Galarza: union. I went down to Patterson immediately and found out that there were some thirty families camping--living in the camp--this was one of those ramshackle government camps--the manager had just posted a notice on the wall of the cottages giving these people, I think, thirty days' notice to move. And the last line gave the explanation. "We have contracted braceros and they will occupy this camp." I had to track down that order and attempt to stop it; but the political force behind it was too great, so these people dispersed in that camp and moved on farther north.

But now we have a different form of mobility. It's urban mobility. We have in the schools of Santa Clara County, and I've observed this also in Southern California, something called inter-district mobility of children. In some cities we find that children will move as many as three times during one school year. So I've looked into that a bit and what we find in Santa Clara is that during the past ten years urban policy, accepted and carried out by city councils and boards of supervisors, calls for carrying out the master plan of Santa Clara and Monterey and other counties in the Bay Area. And the master plan, when you look at it, is a blueprint of the next--well, this master plan that I'm thinking about started about ten years ago and it carries another twenty years. During these thirty years, the economy, the demography, is to be completely re-done. There is a corridor building, from Daly City to the heart of the Peninsula through Santa Clara County, down into Monterey. And if you will place that corridor on a map of the Bay Area, you'll see it runs right through the Mexican communities. So you begin by investigating the causes of inter-district migrancy of children. And you find that the reason is that this is a new pressure upon the farmworkers. So that they cannot stay where they are.

There's only one exception to that story. And I will bring it forward in discussion because it might give us a new model--give you a model--to work in--that is not too dissimilar, not too different from what I just said concerning bilingual education. In 1967 I was asked by some residents of the little town of Alviso, which lies just northeast of San Jose, some eight miles. They had a problem. They had just been advised to get out. There was at that time a population of about 1600 or 1700 people. Some 70 percent were Mexican. And they had been told to pack up and get ready to get out, because the city of San Jose in accordance with its master plan had redesigned that area. It was to be mainly an area for small industry and for tourism.

The central part of Alviso is an area of about eight very large thin blocks, living in the midst of ducks; desolation, but it was their home. The then city manager of San Jose and his cabinet had decided that Alviso stood in the way of this corridor. And, indeed,

Galarza: it did. Right in the middle of it. So I responded, and I organized some house meetings and started an educational program there, with research. The object of which was to prevent the destruction of Alviso. We, again, used this formula of townspeople and academic people, students, and legal resources. It's a long story, and I hope some day it will be written.

The upshot of it was that we stopped the destruction of Alviso. And it's still there. The tide of progress continues to engulf Santa Clara County, but not Alviso. Now, the same thing is happening in central San Jose. There are barrios there that have already been notified that the Mexicans have to get out. Where will they go? They go south. Still further south, until they are pushed up against the hills of Gilroy. And by the time the process reaches that point, who knows, maybe the politicians of this state will have the Mexican solution.

Question: What do you see happening to graduate students or any Chicano that goes into higher education? You mentioned some people that are now in the hierarchy, the power base; it had a bad effect on the community. You know, I come from the law school thing. I see what's happening to a lot of my compañeros and brothers. Is it that we have to stay in the institution, try to change the institution to our perspective of what we have to do?

Galarza: I don't think so. What I've been driving at all this morning, is that if you stay in an institution, I dislike the thing that happens to your mind; you become institutionalized. But if you stay within it and try to come to terms, or rather accept its terms, for your survival, you will have to become one of the Chicanos who will become a fixture on the totem pole. And from that time on, his assignment is to make it easy for the institution to turn its face away from reality.

##

Question: What does a student do that's caught up in that thing now? Would it be a solution to try to set up parallel institutions, a people's college of the law or apprenticeship programs?

Galarza: No, I don't think so. Because these parallel institutions, if you look at them closely, have a lot of similarity with their prototypes. I think the only way to go is for students who have the luck to survive four or five or six years in an institution, is to milk it. Get all you can, all the techniques, all the skill--you have to become as articulate as the best of them. But don't lose sight of the fact that politically you are a sitting pigeon, if that's where you're going to stay.

Question: What percentage of people do you think will go into an institution of higher education and be able to maintain the ability not to get brainwashed?

Galarza: How do you maintain an attitude and a value? You maintain it by keeping in touch with those people who represent that value. That is to say, you know something about bilingual education, you know it's going sour, you know it's not doing what it should be doing--then you make, and maintain and keep, contact with people in the community who are affected by that problem. You get to know them. You win their trust and their confidence, and over time, you become their advisor, their fellow worker, and their participant in action.

Question: I believe I agree with you, that probably one of the greatest concerns that affects us now at the university is the production of intellectuals, who in clothing and in speech speak radically, but who have in essence become this bulwark or beachhead for traditional and even reactionary ideas. We see it here at Berkeley, among a lot of the students, a lot of the professors. What are some of the reasons for that? I'd appreciate an elaboration.

Galarza: Yes, I think the main reason for that situation is that there is a vested interest in the past, and the way it views intellectual endeavor. And the degree to which it accepts it, I call the pigeonhole mentality. Pigeonhole mentality is the division of intellectual interests into disciplines. You become an attorney, an anthropologist, and sociologist, an economist--and so on. Now, in my judgment, that is an inevitable, sort of necessary evil, because the field of knowledge is vast. And you want to organize it provisionally, so that you can make some sense out of the field that you have selected as your interest.

I say provisionally, because, in my opinion, the usefulness of a discipline is the degree and the way in which it becomes useful to society. And so we have, for instance, the problem in Alviso. First thing I did was to set up a team of seven of us--you would have described it as an interdisciplinary team. And it was, but it was no longer so many disciplines getting together once every two weeks to have a high-level talk. We joined our forces because we had skills--in the law, in economics, in research--but the purpose of it was to get to the bottom of what was happening in Alviso. Because our aim was to save that town! That was the focus of our endeavor. We were all, I think, fairly qualified technicians in our respective fields, but the object of our getting together was to save this little town. And we did save it.

In an American university, I think if you look at it closely you'll find that the departments have their vested interests. They want to turn you all into illustrious anthropologists, and after that you can talk about nothing but anthropology, but you won't know that in San Jose and East San Jose, we have some very crucial

Galarza: problems that require anthropological brains to help us! That's the choice you have to make. Find those people in the community who can use anthropological counsel (call it whatever you will; but it's the discipline from which you're coming), apply it to a situation that is urgent--and it's important because these people are losing their homes and their jobs. And you're there to help them. So, my suggestion is to think in terms of a structure that brings you from the academic campus, a community group and some legal support together and go to work on something that is real and pressing and urgent to all of us.

Question: Could you say a few words about what you think of Chicano Studies?

Galarza: I think that historically, Chicano Studies was almost a necessary revolt. Because Chicanos were not being paid attention to. And during the middle sixties you accomplished, remarkably well, sensitizing, shall I say, the American university. Now we have Chicano Studies all over the place. But they're in trouble. We've had about ten years of slack, and the administrations are taking it in. I see the signs all over--reduced budgets, slackening of efforts to recruit, discouragement of scholars--putting them on the tenure track, as if it were a single track going only one way. These are the signs that the Chicano Studies concept is in trouble. And until the Chicano Studies itself recognizes it, it might also become a discipline--isolated from today's people, here and now. It will run the same course, eventually you'll be faced with the choice of becoming a discipline--stuck on the campus, with blinders on--just as every other department is, or you'll be reaching out to new forces that are not content; they're not safe, they're not secure with the present situation. And you are to organize those combinations and give them the best of your skills. If that can come out of Chicano Studies, I would predict that you will not disappear. If you don't, I predict that you will disappear.

You said something about lunch? [laughter]

IV SCHOLARLY CONCERNS; CHALLENGES IN BILINGUAL EDUCATION

[Date of Interview: October 21, 1977]##*

Terminology

Morris: Perhaps you could start by giving us some suggestions as to the terms Chicano, Mexican-American, and Hispanic--how they differ and when each is appropriate?

Galarza: There's really a lot of controversy over the meanings of those terms.

Morris: That's what I suspected.

Galarza: I couldn't define those terms for you. Except by pointing--some people think in terms of this, some people think of that--

Morris: Then, how about yourself--which terms are you most comfortable with?

Galarza: You mean what people call me?

Morris: When you're talking about the work you're doing and the people you're working for, do you say the Mexican-American community or the Chicano--?

Galarza: I try to stay away from terms that rely on ethnicity. I use terms that stand on what you do for a living. What's easier for me to grasp in a situation is when I know that the people are farmworkers, or industrial workers, others are agricultural transients, CETA workers--those are much more meaningful terms. And also, they avoid the problem of digging back into history to suggest that these terms could have evolved from something else. You get into very long arguments, very hot arguments, as to what this meant or that meant thirty-five or forty years ago. I never have been particularly interested in retaining in my memory what those changes

Galarza: in terminology have been, because you can call a person by a certain name--in the course of time he changes occupation. Then his ethnicity doesn't mean very much. Except for people who are very conscious, very aware of ethnic symbols.

I'm trying to think of writers who have dealt with this at great length. The people down at UCLA have worked on this. In Arizona and in New Mexico there is a great deal of scholarly interest in this problem of choice of terminology. I don't think it leads very far, because if you look at these terms--currently, what do they mean--you'll find people who are called Chicanos in San Jose; they're called Chicanos in Imperial Valley; they're called Chicanos in San Francisco. But if you know those people, the occupational differences are more important. To me, anyway. It may be because I have a certain bias against ethnic identity. I don't think people should be handled that way, or should be identified, or should be catalogued, or described--because it's not a permanent characteristic other than to those who believe in very strong racial, ethnic characteristics--and I don't. They're there, they remain--you're born brown, you stay brown. But what does that mean?

Morris: I was thinking about it in terms of this oral history that we're starting out on--as the interviewer, not wishing to offend the future students--when we're talking about Americans of Mexican descent, I'd like to use an appropriate word.

Galarza: Well, now that you've raised the question, I don't think I've paid very much attention to it in my conversations. Maybe subconsciously I was aware of my disinterest. And I just never bothered to identify people, except to say perhaps, when it's appropriate in the context, this group of people came from such and such a place, in such and such a time--describe them historically. But it's never occurred to me to consider the question of the importance. But now that you mention it, it is important to other people.

Morris: Yes, that's what I'm responding to in working with various people on oral histories. We've had some absolutely fascinating discussions about how the terminology--what terminology to use, to describe the various groups.

Galarza: Yes, I'm aware of that in some academic circles--that's all that young scholars talk about. They bridle if you don't call them by just the right word.

Morris: They agree that the terminology, as you pointed out, does change and evolve over the years.

Galarza: No, some of them don't. Some of the young scholars I met in the last year or two are very adamant. They say that in terms of the meaning of the terminology, it doesn't change. It stays--permanent. It's an identity that goes back forever and it establishes your role in history.

Morris: Well, let's leave it for now and see what kind of terminology comes up as we talk.

Accuracy, Memory, and Activism

Morris: In talking about doing this oral history for The Bancroft Library, you decided that what you were most comfortable with was a kind of commentary on your various publications over the years.

Galarza: Yes, my problem with oral history as a method is a multiple one. First of all, I have a kind of allergic reaction to making statements, either oral statements or written ones, when I don't have papers and notes before me. In fact, since our last meeting, in checking over the letters you've sent me, I find myself almost compulsively driven to go back into what little I have left of documentation. I've even been talking to my family to pinpoint certain events which I have not recorded that I have totally discarded from my mind. The result is during these last two weeks I've been practically driven to question whether I'm a reliable commentator without having the tools of my trade in front of me. One of the disastrous things that has happened in the last couple of years is that I had been keeping for some thirty years, my notes --and I thought perhaps I could go back over these cartons. I must have had altogether some 60,000 notes--the material that I used to write these books. I have only, on all those materials, I doubt that I have more than, oh, I would say, 2000 pieces of paper. The rest I destroyed. And I destroyed it because I have no room in my house. Whatever records I think have any value for others I deposited at Stanford. The rest are gone. And matters which are of interest to you as editors of oral history have now caused me problems. I want to be very sure that when I respond to a question and someone comes along next year or fifteen years from now, that it is, if not positively pinpointedly accurate, that it is sufficiently accurate for me to be able to feel that this is good stuff for a scholar.

Also I had another disturbing experience since we talked last: some of my old friends and my new ones are putting down their impressions of what they think my life has been. So they send me their manuscripts and ask me to correct them. And I find statements which are impressionistic--to the point that I think, they're not deliberately distorted of course, but they're inaccurate. So I've refused to correct the manuscripts. I say, you take the responsibility. I can't go back to the time when I was working for the Pan-American Union, for instance.

Galarza: All the records that I kept during those ten or twelve years are somewhere in Washington. And those incidents, which might be of great importance to some scholars some day, are there. If I were talking about the days of my work at the Pan-American Union, I would be very hard put to tell you when a certain decision was made by me and the effect that it led to. Now when I was in the process, we were exceedingly careful about that. We had a lot of historical material and knowledge that is now, I suppose, in the National Archives; and the rest is in the basement of the Pan-American Union. So, that's been my real concern--my mind has been turning--how do I face a drastic change in my way of responding, my way of reading a record, which for forty years has been disciplined to the point where I triple-check everything I write.

So, this has been troubling me a great deal and the only answer I could come up with was practically like writing a series of monographs or a series of books for me to check the subject that you're interested in beforehand and to do the research and be able to come back and read from notes with a reasonable certainty that I'm giving you some accurate information. Or at least an accurate recall of impressions. It's a real troublesome thing. I think I must attribute all this to my old master, Dr. Shephard. He scared the daylights out of me, and I've remained scared ever since. [laughs] So I wanted you to know that.

Now the other thing that raises a problem since we last talked is the situation into which I have been forced. You should read this. [hands interviewer letter] That's not ancient history, that's current history.

Morris: This is a letter to Dr. Knight concerning the Bilingual Consortium?*

Galarza: That's right. I'll give it to you in a nutshell. You can get the dates from those papers. What happened was that I have been the sole trustee for the Alviso Community Assistance Fund for eleven years. The money is handled by a Mexican organization in San Jose, and they spend it on my clearance. About some four weeks ago, a copy of one of my orders to spend a bit of that money fell into the hands of the Consortium administrators. And they reproduced it, gave it to certain people and a meeting was called in Alviso where I have spent eleven years of my life. This letter was distributed and comment was made. The impression was created that I had wrongfully misappropriated \$1500.

*October 8, 1977. See Appendix A.

Morris: That's a distressing charge.

Galarza: So, very much against my will, I have to do whatever I can to correct that situation. It's expensive; an expensive task. It's also, in a sense, a task of rounding up witnesses who know the background of the Alviso fund. And who know how it had been spent. So, just when I had thought that we had come to the point where I could turn over to other people the controversy of, the airing of the bilingual issue.

My state of mind is one of very deep concern. I'm not particularly hostile toward the people who did this. But I don't think it would be wise for me to just drop it and attribute it to carelessness or imprudence or a temporary fit of not knowing what you're doing. We've come to a crucial incident in our current concern. I'll have to round up witnesses who live in Los Angeles; one of them lives in Texas--and get them here--possibly--and concern myself with the defense of my reputation. Those are the concerns I have about-- But mainly I'm concerned about the style of oral history, as far as I'm concerned. What do you think?

Morris: I think you speak with meaning and importance on every subject that I've ever heard you talk about. Just from the insights and experience that are in your mind. In your publications there is the, as you say, the triple-checked data, so that I don't think that's as important as your interpretation of why it was necessary to write the books. And then before that, why it was necessary to engage in the personal labors--both in research and in organizing--organizing in the fields, and the other kind of organizing, working with the people in Alviso. The other thing about oral history now--you mentioned once that you had some acquaintance with Allan Nevins' ideas when he first started.

Galarza: Not really an acquaintance--I was in one of his lectures. I heard about oral history and went to this lecture. He didn't talk about oral history, incidentally--it was European history. I saw the man and heard him explain very, very briefly in two or three sentences what oral history is about. Then the whole thing dropped out of my mind until you came along.

Morris: Do you recall the general drift of what he was saying about it in his European history lecture?

Galarza: No, I entered the back of the room as an auditor in Fayerweather Hall, and listened to him discourse. That was the only lecture I attended, because my interest was in finding out what this oral history thing was. I thought it was some new research technique, but it was just a lecture that he gave--but not on the subject of oral history.

- Morris: It is a research technique. What our office does is to preserve an intermediary stage--a transcript of the interviews--that many who use oral history in their research do not. We consider the transcript a document that you produced; therefore, you have rights of the author to revise what you said or footnote it or expand upon it.
- Galarza: Yes, I understand that. No, that's not my problem with it. The revision of anything I dictate on a tape would send me back scurrying to see what records I had left, myself. And there are very few. Quite a number, in anything dealing with farm labor, I'd have to go back to Stanford to check. Other periods of my life, I'd have to go far afield. As a matter of fact, even a period of just twelve years is totally out of my hands. It's a foolish mistake, but then if I had ever viewed my activities at any time as very important stuff, I probably would have kept these mountains of paper. And I just couldn't see myself becoming that involved! [laughs]
- Morris: What is remarkable and impressive, and I personally think exceedingly important, is why is it and how is it that an individual puts the kind of labor and concern and care--decade after decade--into these things.
- Galarza: Well, if you want the root answer, the beginning of it is Dr. Shephard. Dr. Shephard was a remarkable scholar, and he just indoctrinated all of us.
- Morris: But most scholars don't actually go out and live in their subject matter and work with it. That's what makes you such a--
- Galarza: Well, you see, I would have to go back forty, maybe forty-five years and re-examine my mind and ask for help to pinpoint situations under which those decisions were made. In a sense, I begin to regret that I was so generous with my papers. I shouldn't have given them away now that this situation arises. But I was wondering how people like Paul Taylor, for instance--a good friend of mine--
- Morris: I think he's kept all those papers.
- Galarza: He has; he has a remarkable collection. And you ask him a question, I've been in his home a couple of times, and he dives into his chaos and there it is. Now that is the kind of conditioning I've had, and Paul can correct, I imagine, and re-check an oral statement--and I dread that, I really do. I just received a manuscript from [H.L.] Mitchell. He's doing some sketchy interviews for the National Labor Archives.
- Morris: Is he? That should be interesting.

- Galarza: I'm about to ask him to delete mine. His impressions of some of the things he remembers about me--I wouldn't remember them, but he does. So here he dictates into a tape and they come out on the typewriter--he sends me a carbon copy. And I quietly pray that no one will ever base certain details of the things I've forgotten of my time in the union--on what he reports. It isn't that he is intentionally inaccurate, it's that this way of remembering--sort of off the cuff--is pleasant to talk about, to embroider such and such a situation--and maybe inject a little humor about it. This is very pleasant kind of way of talking. But it's not a very pleasant way, not a very sensible way I think, to give cues to scholars. So I'm going to be very troubled, as we go--and I'm going to be apt to avoid certain answers, certain situations because I really can't respond to them, and don't feel sure that my memory or even my feelings are to be relied on.
- Morris: I would accept that proviso, and I think it's a good one to be made, one that often is forgotten when you're dealing with personal material.
- Galarza: The number of young students, young scholars who are beginning to work in farm labor is increasing, and this is fine--I hoped this would happen. But that brings along another situation. They're coming to me. I'm now working with five graduate students from five different universities. They've been sent to me to help them with their dissertations. They're sent by paid faculty. They come to my house. I gather documentation; I have copies made for them. It is a relationship which is forced upon me. And if I accept a relationship, I've got to respond. These people need help, but I'm thinking of cancelling all that. It's a hard decision. There's one coming to my house on the 28th. He's formulating his dissertation and wants me to check it and to read it when he's finished.
- Morris: Isn't that what is normally done by a faculty person at the university where the student is--?
- Galarza: It is! I think it's going to be difficult, because these are young friends of mine. And I know how eager they are to be accurate and to do something important. So, I'm not certain that I can produce a transcript that I will be easy in my mind about, unless I got the transcript and then took the time necessary to check from whatever resources I can resuscitate to make sure that this is a supplement to the stuff I've written. I could, of course, use the Stanford collection in this way.
- Morris: If it's technical details on dates and things like that, I could do some of the checking.

- Galarza: The collection's quite large and they haven't indexed it yet. That's another thing. You know how you discover the truth. I had thought that once the documents were at Stanford that they were bedded down and then scholars would start coming! That isn't true.
- Morris: There's a finding guide there which I found very helpful.
- Galarza: Yes, they're only about half way through the collection. I was thinking that I would scrounge around and see if I could raise some money to help them finance students to push that along because the collection's been there three years, and they're having an awfully hard time. The last time I talked to Miss Walker they were just starting to raise the funds for completion of the index. I'm not eager to do that because it's a re-living of situations and the forced draft of my memory to a reconstruction of events.
- Morris: What I have read of your work is remarkably thorough in its dates and specifics. Perhaps we could work in a more general sense, with the kind of broad question about when you were starting out in college--was your primary concern the academic training and did you think in terms of a scholarly career or was it to be a life of action?
- Galarza: I don't think that's an answerable question, because these questions didn't occur to me at the time. Looking back in retrospect over forty or fifty years of study and action and writing, I'd have to really examine my motivation--my decisions--that I wasn't actually making at the time. I was moving into a career, an academic career, but my conditioning was finished. When I left Columbia, I wasn't a scholar. I probably still am not a scholar, but at least my sense of responsibility of what to do when you're investigating--
- And then, situation by situation--why did we come to California? Why did I join the union? I really have to rethink my past to find out why I did that! This I find very hard.
- Morris: That's understandable, being a man of action, and involved with the present so much.
- Galarza: That's right. In the work that I've done in any environment, in any setting, I have never and I still don't think that it's fun to be alive because you can recall what you did and you did it and what you might have done better--what you did was very intelligent or was really very stupid and so on. So, you see where I'm changing my style of handling material, and I find that very, very hard. My wife and I have been talking about incidents that I have forgotten but she hasn't. But I guess she hasn't forgotten the meaning of those events was different to her than it was to me.

Galarza: And even recent events. We were talking about, what was it, something that happened not more than a couple of years ago, had to do with the Studio Laboratory.

Morris: In this area?

Galarza: Yes, in the bilingual education. We were trying to, at least, I was trying to recall--getting myself to see, in the mood of answering questions for a record, and she raised questions I never thought of. Did we plan to do it this way? Did we expect it to go this way or that way and when choices were to be made, why did I make them? So, you see, it's a mental attitude that comes out of a life of habituating yourself. I think two things are important: one is my academic training, which I would have to undo and re-do; the other is the aversion I have to reconstructing the past in terms of whether or not you did the right thing or the wrong thing.

Morris: I'm not asking right or wrong--it's the process.

Galarza: No, no--the process. But this mental set--this attitude I have toward recollection and digging into the past and so forth, has great significance to me, because right now in San Jose, this document I have received introduces a totally new element in the battle over litigation.

Morris: In what way?

Galarza: I didn't anticipate that I would be charged with fraud. Never in the world did it cross my mind that, at some point, I would have to devote all my energies and what we have of our resources--our income, to respond to this. This to me is life--your ability to respond to new situations and to sense that your life is forward-moving. And the reason why that is important is not so much that your own taste or your values hinge upon the outcome, but it's that the decisions that are not immediately before me which I didn't anticipate, which are--as you might guess--tremendously disagreeable--upon this new situation and how I handle it, depends--I hope --a bit of the course of education in Santa Clara County. And it's that sense that I have continuously which is forward-moving.

Morris: Of the present as a process.

Galarza: Yes. I think that there is a doubles law--the past of an event and why you did it, why you became involved, but more important is the future of the event. Because that is where the interests of others hinge upon what you do and how you do it. This is what I--

Morris: Except that the historians' feeling about that is that without the past there wouldn't be the present.

Galarza: I guess the difference is, you see, I'm not a real historian on that plane. I'm not really a historian in the sense that the past doesn't condition my response to the now and my understanding that maybe just the immediate future hinges upon the immediate present. Because I'm concerned with what I think are important public issues, I can't possibly dedicate myself to reviewing the past. And I don't want any stories to come along, this really makes me shrink, especially for young scholars who might be coming along who will want to know a lot more than I've written. And who will get cues that are misleading or inadequate or incomplete. That I don't want to, I don't want to mislead them.

Morris: What strikes me in your interest in bilingual education and crusade for it is, at one point you mentioned to me that that started because of your interest in your own daughter's education.

Galarza: No, we didn't have a problem in our family. I would normally expect to teach my children Spanish, and I did. And that's why they speak Spanish. It isn't until very, very recently that this becomes a matter of public concern. My involvement in bilingual education goes back only a few years, and it's well within my memory, and it's in the records that are available to me at hand. Although I came very close to turning over our archives. I thought we were through with this affair. I was very anxious to forget it. Get out of town, and let others struggle with the situation. This comes along, but I didn't give away my records. I still have some. Although I was very much disgusted to find that some important documents, which I loaned to students, are gone.

Morris: They didn't feel an obligation to return them so the record would be complete?

Galarza: There's one proposal which I didn't write. I had two copies, and I loaned one to a student. I can't find the student. And I can't find the report.

So that is my response, my reaction to oral history so far as it concerns me. I don't want to be troubled by this sense of-- you know, better go back and re-check. The gaps in my memory are enormous. I never thought it was important to keep in my mind a whole record of my professional career.

Bilingual Education in Santa Clara County: Controversy and Commitment

Morris: I don't know that you should have to feel that you should recall all of it. There are other people that you have worked with and other people who have been involved in these concerns. Did the bilingual education, as a matter of public policy, come out of earlier stages?

Galarza: No. As a matter of public policy, it's only five years back, as it affects Santa Clara. Well, as a matter of fact, it doesn't go back even that far; it only goes back to '72, '75, '77, some three years, when I became deeply concerned. Now that part of the record is being collected by a couple of students at Santa Cruz. They probably will do their doctorate dissertations on it. And it's to them that I'm sure that I will turn over my documentation. It's a risk--documents get lost, people don't prize them as much as you do. I'm thinking, perhaps, I will add those documents instead of giving them to Santa Cruz, I might deposit them at Stanford in a separate section, and then I would feel at ease. They would be preserved; others could come to their own conclusions from the data. I had hoped to bring this chapter to a close this Spring. This litigation will probably keep me busy for another two or three years.

Morris: Oh, dear.

Galarza: See, I tend to center my mind on the consequences of the present situation, and its immediate future and who it affects. Now in this case, let me speculate out loud for a minute where this might lead. If I filed a suit, which I will, I'll have to finance it of course. But aside from the family concern, a lawsuit would lead us into, might lead us into an examination not just of the Consortium--it might lead us into an examination of federal policy with respect to bilingual education. And if it does that, we're faced with a controversy, a legal controversy that involves our friends in Santa Clara County, the ten school districts of Santa Clara County that are in the Consortium, the Consortium administrators, the State Department of Education--which has a secondary role in all this, but an important role, and HEW.

I won't shrink from odds of that kind, but I am concerned at the drain on time, drain on resources and more, above all, in the process of involvement of my friends. See, they are--the more they learn about the politics of bilingual education, the more--the deeper their understanding of the process--the more they can be reached. And this, I think, is the test of all people--engagement. And as they become engaged, we have them out to work with twenty-five or thirty new friends. What kind of research do we do for them?

Morris: How much do you delegate to them so that it isn't all on your shoulders?

Galarza: Not much. These are people who started with very small, very narrow motivation. Something happened in their school district that they didn't like--they joined our group. And, I initiate with each one of these people a learning process. I'm spending I would say twenty-five to thirty hours a week talking to these people and giving them the significance of everything we do and putting them together as a team. It's very strenuous work.

Morris: Yes, it sounds like a network.

Galarza: That's what we have, but it's a very loose network because the motivation isn't all that clear. People in our group immediately respond for good and sound reasons, as I introduce them through a teaching process into the ramifications, the significances of where this might go. See, that's why I'm a teacher.

Morris: You think that possibly the understanding and participation in the political process is more important than the resolution of a problem in bilingual education?

Galarza: I think that the two hang on each other. We'll never resolve the problems that have arisen in bilingual education unless all of us are very careful to understand the political process that is going on. Then when we understand the political process, we have to consider the choices that we have to make to produce solutions that we think are good solutions rather than bad ones. I'm really conducting and have for the last few years, conducting an adult seminar in San Jose.

Morris: [chuckles] It's primarily parents?

Galarza: Some are teachers and some are aides and some are just interested citizens, but they all have in common this enlarging commitment. I think the reason for that is that none of us, or very few of us, have had a chance to become politically aware and politically involved and politically active. As our understanding deepens, an occasional little victory that we achieve creates a very deep sense of commitment to the discovery process. And that I think is what we simply have to depend on if you're going to develop a body of citizens that's responsible, committed, capable, serious, not frivolous. So we've done remarkably well, but at a price, and this [lawsuit] is part of the price.

Climate of Federal Funding

Morris: Involving citizens in democratic processes is sort of a basic American ideal. Why does it reach a point where it goes into litigation rather than being a continuing process?

Galarza: Right. In this particular instance, it goes into litigation, I think, I can just give you some hunches, but as I observed--

##

Galarza: To improvise an answer, I would say that to begin with, the motivation of the top administrators in the Consortium is heavily influenced by the fact that they are getting federal monies. And federal monies give you an immense amount of power within your own community--you can hire people, you can dispose of resources. Secondly, I think they have forgotten that it is important to America that we discover continuously more effective ways of making social experience understandable to more of us. These ladies and gentlemen have also forgotten that you can't train people for citizenship--not necessarily train them, but you cannot assist them to understand the political process in which they are involved, how it works and the alternatives that it encloses, unless everybody has access to the same information. It must be participation based on informed action. So, one of the struggles we've had with these people is related to the difficulties which they put in our way to be informed on current happenings. They just don't want an informed public opinion. In our case, by public opinion I mean a group of thirty, thirty-five people who are constantly meeting to maintain their position.

I also think that the climate created by federal grantsmanship has taken hold of bilingual education. It's a climate created by the notion that you can run things from HEW, from the Office of Bilingual Education, that you can select grantees, you can tell them how to do what and when. You're so distant from these 300-odd programs that are scattered over the country, you're so distant from them that they can no more keep informed on what the Office of Bilingual Education does, than the Office of Bilingual Education can keep informed on what is happening locally. What is the primary concern that we in San Jose have about bilingual ed? They don't know! They don't come and talk to people. This also leads to the temptation to create fiction.

Morris: In what way?

Galarza: Well, the guidelines and statutes require parent participation. Which in principle is fine--it leads in a very healthy direction. But what has come up in this connection in San Jose is a myth. It's

Galarza: an appearance of parent participation. We have documented this. We're now at a point of challenging the right of HEW, the Office of Bilingual Education, the Consortium, to create committees, advisory committees that are so obviously susceptible to the new direction. Now, these are some of the factors that--I'm here again, just hunching, speculating--to go back to your question, our work has been so effective, even modest as it is, that it has created waves that have become very ominous to them.

Morris: In the Santa Clara school districts or in Washington?

Galarza: In Santa Clara County.

Morris: Is there no regional west coast California HEW office which provides a linkage?

Galarza: No, there isn't. The bilingual programs under Title VII are called centralized programs. There is no dispersion of authority to regional offices. So we're faced with a structure, an administrative, bureaucratic structure, which rests upon the fact that every district in the country that submits a Title VII proposal has got to apply to the Office of Bilingual Education.

Morris: In Washington.

Galarza: In Washington. They decide whether this is an important project or whether it isn't. They decide upon the amount. They are consulted with respect to the qualifications of personnel. The decisions are made there, and you can't get at the reasons behind these decisions. In reviewing all of these considerations, we come back to your question.

In the face of all this power and all the advantages of distance in the resources, under such tremendous odds [in their favor], why should they have to resort to this? Because my role in this has been central and remains central. Apparently, somebody came to the conclusion, whether it was a hunch or an impulse, that if I could be put on the defensive, if my stand in the community could be diminished if not destroyed, the matter could be resolved in their favor--they could go right along doing what they've always been doing.

Educational Choice and the Studio Lab; Ideals of Bilingual Education

Morris: Were you not a part of the original discussions that set up a bilingual program in the county?

Galarza: We had our program going for two years when the Consortium came along. First thing we knew they had their grant from Washington.

Morris: And you had already had a volunteer kind of a program going in some schools?

Galarza: For two years. So, then there's another consideration that I think is important. When we conceived, seven of us, the Studio Lab, we talked at length about what it should be and what we should try to do. We agreed that if bilingual education did not present a choice of educational methods, it wasn't worth it. We set out to define the orientation of bilingual education. What it should mean to children and teachers in the community.

It very quickly became clear to the administrators of the school systems in Santa Clara County that we were going to be very critical of the way education is being managed in our community. The first issue we raised was the curriculum. We said, no, we're not going to give you a Spanish version of methodology and of concepts that have obviously proved negative for Mexican kids. Maybe it was a mistake; that was our platform. It took these people two years to reach the point where they could tell us openly, straightforwardly, no bones made about it, that this kind of choice was not permissible. There's no room in the public school system for an alternative such as we were proposing.

Morris: I've heard a similar kind of discussion in other kinds of educational programs. The standard program has not worked for many children, therefore we should try alternatives.

Galarza: Yes, sure. The idea of alternatives is all over!

Morris: And that children learn in different ways and therefore they should have a choice of educational--

Galarza: Right. We went further. We said, if you will allow us to do this, give us a school room somewhere and let us teach the way we think is appropriate--especially for young children. But they shrank from that. We came very close to getting one school room at one elementary school.

Morris: Was the Studio Lab outside the school hours and outside the school building?

Galarza: No, the Studio Lab was not for children. The Studio Lab was for adults where we hoped to train parents and teachers and aides to accept our notions of how to teach children, and to gradually find a place in the school system where demonstration classes could be held over a period of time.

Morris: Were you doing this on a contract with the school district or just as an independent effort?

Galarza: No, we started it on private funds. There wasn't even money at the outset to do this. We had to raise private funds and we operated on that for two years.

Morris: Local foundation type money?

Galarza: No, this was the giant Olympic people who gave us money. When that ran out, we then were funded for a while by the Model Cities project which was then in its dying days. Then we went into a consultant relationship with the school district--San Jose Unified School District. For, I think, one semester, they provided us consultant's fees.

Morris: So that at one point, they were impressed enough to hire the group as consultants.

Galarza: No, they weren't impressed. They were already looking for a federal grant.

Morris: That was what I wondered, whether Santa Clara applied to Washington for one of these Title VII grants or whether Washington said the district should develop a project.

Galarza: The last semester of our activity--they sought and obtained a federal grant; took them about six months to maneuver that.

Morris: That's about par for the course, isn't it?

Galarza: Right. And when they had that grant, within three days they discarded the Studio Lab's input. All this, to get back to your question, creates a presumption in my mind anyway--that we were being and we have been recently much more effective than we thought.

Morris: That's interesting.

Galarza: The only additional defense that they could think of was defamation.

Morris: A direct attack, a personal--

Galarza: And that's what I have here.

Morris: Why would they pick on Alviso? Are there educational programs in Alviso?

Galarza: No, Alviso has no significance educationally. Alviso is significant because of the fact that I am personally responsible for the administration of this small grant which I obtained from the LARAS

Galarza: family foundation. It's dwindling now; in another six months it will be gone. But it was quite obvious that in this grant which is administered by a fiscal agent in San Jose, so-called MACSA [Mexican American Community Services Agency], it was obvious that I was central; I am central to the continuing support of the community that's under continual threat of being demolished. You have here a conjuncture of two situations, and they are of very recent origin. They're fresh in our minds, in my mind. One was that the fact that Alviso was not destroyed in 1968 as the mayor announced, the mayor of San Jose. It was a very serious challenge and a setback to urban policy in Santa Clara County.

Morris: The mayor had wanted Alviso destroyed?

Galarza: He announced that the Alviso people would have to be removed. In the course of eleven years, I have been crucial to the organization of the resistance. And here was the City of San Jose which has swept in territories and enlarged itself to the point where it has become almost the nucleus of one of these horrendous metropolitan complexes. And we stood up and said no! You can do what you want elsewhere, but you're not going to do it in Alviso. And they haven't done it in Alviso! So here I am administering this dinky little fund--

Morris: But you mentioned that it does have an additional financial person, who actually--

Galarza: No, fiscal agent--

Morris: Fiscal agent.

Galarza: Their role is to spend the money on my approval.

Morris: And that's not an individual; it's a bank, financial--?

Galarza: --organization. It's a private, non-profit organization called MACSA [spells it]. They had the money under their control. It was understood from the very beginning between me and the donors that I was not to handle the funds; and what a lucky provision that was! [laughs]

Morris: Yes, indeed, as it has turned out. How would you have wanted the situation with bilingual education in the Santa Clara schools to have worked out?

Galarza: Well, I would have wanted it introduced into--stage by stage--into schools whose methods of instruction and philosophy of instruction would be such that the Mexican children, the Spanish-speaking segment of the population, would not be subjected to

Galarza: simply a duplicate, a carbon-copy of the system of what's been going on in education in our community for the last fifty years. That's what we fundamentally wanted. That's why we have never quarreled too much over secondary issues such as--should teachers be compelled to become proficient in Spanish? Or should there be x number of years for training teachers or $x - 1$ or $x + 2$? These are important issues, but we haven't stressed them. What we have wanted is for the controversy to move in the direction of questioning the trunk, let's say, on which bilingual education was to be grafted. The Consortium makes no provision whatever for reduction of classes, for instance.

Morris: The number of children in a classroom?

Galarza: There are classes in San Jose in these districts that have thirty-five children.

Morris: Elementary grade, younger children?

Galarza: Right. We also wanted (we made this an issue from the very beginning) we wanted an enormous amount of stress on the arts, especially in the kindergarten and first grade. We didn't want to teach reading the way it's been taught. We wanted to engage the child as fully and as deeply as we could in what we think is basic, not just to present learning, but to all your future experiences in learning. Namely, that your mind and your feelings have to become involved in the thing that you're learning! We consider it absolutely fundamental! One of the first questions that was addressed to me by the district was please prepare, in Spanish, for use in the bilingual program, please prepare a guide on phonics. I wouldn't think of it.

Well, a series of issues of that kind helped us to define the answer to your question. What kind of school system were we visualizing that would enable us to honestly say that bilingual education, a vastly important innovation in federal policy--was really going to lead to educational change, not educational petrification.

Morris: In the business of governance of the schools, was that a part of what you hoped would happen?

Galarza: Very much so, although interestingly, we haven't stressed it and the Consortium administrators haven't grasped it. But there was a time, some three years ago, when we were going into this: what about how you govern a school; how do you structure a school? I wrote a paper which fortunately wasn't published, but it was discussed. How do you organize a school--say an elementary school of the first three grades? We started by eliminating the principals,

- Galarza: and in his place we suggested a collegium of teachers. The teachers were to meet once a week to discuss the current programs, instructional programs. The collegium was to have complete authority over educational decisions, subject to review by the principal, but not subject to dictation. We were on that track; so we intended to totally upset the governance of the schools. It was at that point that we injected the facts.
- Morris: Was this ideal a school in which there'd be children that were native Spanish-speaking and children that were native English-speaking?
- Galarza: Right--very much so. Concerning parent participation, what we visualized, very much wanted, was an organization of parents related to specific classrooms. My child is in the second grade; therefore, I should be a member of parents' committee of that grade. Adding to that, a process of parent counseling and parent education.
- Morris: Counseling for parents? And education for parents?
- Galarza: For parents. Based upon their continuous observation of what children were doing in their class, and explaining to them why we were doing things in a certain way. And in coming to grips with terrific issues, Pat came to me, a man--he said, my opinion about a school is that it's a place where if my little boy misbehaves I want the principal to have the right to beat him. We take that as a statement. We bring it up, bring it forward for class discussion, parent discussion. And we look at all the implications of that. We maybe have a second inquiry, a second discussion until we win these parents, to accept the idea that as a teacher or as a parent you invite your children's confidence --its trust. Its delight with you. Then you begin to teach the parents--what do you do at home with these bilingual kids, you, yourself. This was part of the governance structure we had in mind. So, really, it's no wonder that they destroyed us.
- Morris: Well, did some of the people from your Studio Lab end up in the Consortium? Or are the people running the Consortium a totally different group?
- Galarza: No--totally different. Although, we've been interested to observe that several of the key personnel of the first staff--staff of 1975-76--were teachers and aides who had taken training with the Studio Lab.
- Morris: Was it a matter that the school district just wanted a, what was the phrase, an indigenous group of Spanish-speaking people as part of their application for the federal funds?

Galarza: Not entirely, although I think that was a consideration. It was also the need to staff the program with persons who were theoretically Spanish-speaking. These would be Spanish surname teachers who were already in the system. To that were added the aides, many of whom were parents. It didn't turn out according to theory because these persons were really not competent in Spanish.

Morris: Oh, that's interesting.

Galarza: They were not.

Morris: They lost Spanish fluency, or they never had it?

Galarza: This generation of teachers and aides probably, in all probability most of them represent a generation three times removed from the culture of the original migrants who were their ancestors, their grandparents. So they have become totally immersed in American culture and what has remained with many of them in the way of language skills is a very faded recollection of what Spanish is.

Legal Pressure on the Alviso Community Organization Project

Galarza: My response to this attack, let me call your attention because you raised the point. There is a letter there, a copy of my letter asking for the transfer of these funds by MACSA to the Alviso committee.* My letter, of course, is in English because it's addressed to MACSA. When the Consortium administrators got a hold of it, decided to publish it, they translated it into Spanish. The translation is there with my signature.** Is my name typed at the bottom of that?

Morris: [refers to letter] It's typed Ernesto Galarza and it is in Spanish.

Galarza: That's right. Now that is their version of what I said in English.

Morris: And would you agree with this Spanish version of what you had written?

*Ernesto Galarza to Jose Villa, September 12, 1977. See Appendix A.

**Letter to Sr. Jose Villa, 12 Septiembre 1977. See Appendix A.

Galarza: Now turn to my letter to Ms. Martinez.* Have you got it there? Maybe it's just ahead.

Morris: Yes. There is attached to this a copy of a one-page transcript.**

Galarza: That's the answer to your question.

Morris: [reading] Please send me an acceptable translation [chuckles] of the letter referred--oh, dear--reflects seriously on my ability to write in the Spanish language. You mention your Mini Libros here. Were those written for children in San Jose? They're delightful, they're delightful.

Galarza: This is the first time in a long struggle with these people over some three years now that they've given me an opportunity to raise this issue. I've known from the beginning that their Spanish is very inadequate. You can tell in your conversations with them. They have never communicated with me in Spanish. I've never had one telephone conversation with any of them in Spanish. They are ill at ease with Spanish. I knew this!

Morris: Many of the teachers themselves are not bilingual; is that what you're saying?

Galarza: That's right. This gives me the opportunity to demonstrate that. Without authorization, they published a version of my English letter translated into a text which I would be ashamed to have to explain to anyone who knows Spanish. So I'm waiting for the correction.

Morris: Why didn't you write your letter to MACSA in Spanish?

Galarza: Because they're English-speaking there too.

Morris: And primarily in dealing with business affairs?

Galarza: Well, MACSA is a community agency funded by United Way which has the standing of a non-profit institution. So they act as fiscal agents for various programs. They handle the money, they keep the books. It's a good system. It enables me to unload that responsibility on them with respect to the Alviso Fund,

*Ernesto Galarza to Ms. Olivia Martinez, October 8, 1977. See Appendix A.

**Letter (draft) to Sr. Jose Villa. See Appendix A.

Morris: One reason for it, I imagine, is that there is then a free-standing institution, and no individual either bears all the responsibility or all the onus in matters of dispute.

Galarza: That's right. I did not want to myself receive funds. The original grant was for \$20,000. First of all, it created bookkeeping problems for me. Secondly, I don't have standing with the IRS to avoid having to pay taxes.

Morris: As a non-profit institution. [laughs]

Galarza: I'm not a non-profit institution. A lot that I do is non-profit but I don't have the standing. The fiscal agent is a very fine mechanism for us to get things done. So the Consortium picked up that relationship, I thought possibly out of desperation: they can't deal with us, so they seem to have decided that if they could take me out of circulation, discredit me by questioning this fund, that we'd stop criticizing them.

You see, experiences like these, incidents that are unforeseen, not predictable at all, are part of a very dynamic process involving many people, which has always been my point of view. When we have gone through a battle, I get rid of the records; I put it out of my mind, and I get myself ready to respond to the needs of my community, my contemporaries, if the matter is worthwhile. So you can see why I'm not a good historian.

Morris: This morning's discussion, I think, has been fascinating and very useful and exactly the kind of thing that I think is worthy of preservation as oral history.

Galarza: Well, this gives me a slightly different view. I'm able to recall these incidents, to put them together analytically and possibly usefully, for several reasons. One, is that they're now, they're current, they're here, and this to me is dominant. Secondly, I can see from day to day a creative handling of a situation which represents a very stimulating learning process.

Morris: For everybody involved.

Galarza: For everybody. I've had conversations with members of our group who've made very important personal decisions as to careers, as to family relationships, as to how they relate to their children, that have grown out of the discussions that we have once a month, and the sharing of documents, and the continuous analysis of new situations as they arise.

Morris: It turns a light on in your head.

Galarza: Very much so! I would venture to say that, since you used that metaphor, I'd much rather spend my life keeping that light burning than renewing the fuel--refueling the oil cans that would illumine why I did this years ago, why I didn't do it; was it good? Was it effective?

This current episode we are having with bilingual education is continuing--it's an ongoing thing. We had a meeting yesterday about these letters. We had about ten people there. They were the first to see the text of this letter. Their response was if we have to go to court and maintain our complaint with HEW, we start right away--committing so much per family, per month. One gentleman who has a very good position with a corporation is going to rent a truck weekends and circulate around town to gather newspapers which he will sell at \$24-34 a ton.

Morris: The price has gone up.

Galarza: Yes, that's what he told us yesterday. The cohesion that's growing among those thirty people. One of our former members is now a teacher in Los Angeles. She called me the other day,

Morris: Had you contacted her or how had the word gotten to her?

Galarza: No, she was a member of our seminar and she had come to the meetings of the Studio Lab and had joined our work last year. See, that is to me, the important way to live.

Morris: I agree, and it's right here and now and you have to do this now. However, I would like a few more conversations of this kind. I'd like to talk with you about Alviso too, because I think that's one--

Impact on the Mexican Experience

Galarza: Yes, now that's ongoing.

Morris: That's ongoing and--

Galarza: --and the bilingual education situation is ongoing and I'm not committing myself, but there is a situation just around the corner that touches upon President Carter's immigration policy.

Morris: Yes, I was wondering about that, there's--

Galarza: I have been asked to advise groups on that and I have resisted, but I'm talking to a couple of young friends who have important policy positions. By talking with them I think I can teach them some of the things that the Consortium is teaching us, in relation to bilingual education.

Now, those are the three chariots that are moving awfully fast within my range of activities. They're ongoing, they're current, they involve other than myself, and they might have important implications for public policy. Alviso already has. The bilingual education quarrel that we're in obviously must be making an impact on somebody, because they have to resort to defamation to respond. And the other--the agricultural situation is just around the corner.

Morris: And that's a new round of an old struggle?

Galarza: Right.

Morris: Is there some parallel to--you've been through this litigation struggle before with the union and did you find the litigation process exhilarating and worth the energy and pain?

Galarza: No, I don't think any of it is worth it. It's always painful and it's always enormously expensive. I have to keep dreaming up ways of raising money to meet these contingencies. And there's nothing you can do about legal process.

Morris: In terms of time and cost.

Galarza: Nothing you can do about it. So we've gained experience but it's not the kind of experience that would enable you to control the situation. You just know that certain processes have to be gone through and that's it. Now, the Alviso thing that you mentioned is still very current and events are moving. We have hired an attorney to draft an outline of a lawsuit against the City of San Jose, to force them to comply with the obligations under the community services provisions of the law.

Morris: In a month or six weeks when there's a lull in these chariots [both laugh], I think it would be very valuable to--

Galarza: You have this background on, the story about the bilingual thing and if I need to refresh my memory there's a drawerful of papers. And that is how I feel comfortable. I can tell you right now, for instance, that there was a letter of certain content that I want to speak into a tape from that letter. On Alviso, that's still the case. Although there, I hope we're in a stage of cleaning up that situation, but it may not be.

Morris: But if the whole process is still fresh enough in your mind, it would be nice to have--

Galarza: Yes, and I have some documentation.

Morris: --an overview of that, because that preservation of a community in the face of encroaching--

Galarza: Right, yes. Now if you take these three horseraces that I'm trying to stay on top of--taken together they do have a significance for an analysis of the Mexican experience, contemporaneously. These are three levels of analysis and of action and of organizing that affect the Mexican community, that can be applied elsewhere.

In the case of Alviso, I know of at least two dissertations that are underway; I know that there are courses being offered on Alviso in two universities. There are now two repositories of documents on Alviso; really, three. I'm one, the Chicano Studies Library here [at UC Berkeley] is another, and there's a third repository at the New Mexico State University in Las Cruces. So there are three places strategically located for the convenience of students who want to delve into this aspect of the Mexican experience.

Morris: I'm delighted that part of it is here because I'd like to take a look at it.

Galarza: Ricardo Chabran has it in hand. I would say that the end of these stories is by no means in sight. The immigration issue is just beginning.

Morris: Yes, I was really startled when I saw it recently in the newspapers. I thought of you immediately.

Galarza: That's enormously significant. Now, I wouldn't want to go back thirty years and try to find documents which I wrote, reports which I filed with committees and people I talked to. This would be an enormous task for me, if I wanted to produce an oral history. But, there is this taproot of previous experience which now goes into focus in relation to these contemporary events. And since there is nothing written on what is happening now, or how these political alignments and realignments are taking place--to have a record of these, hot off the griddle!

Morris: Very exciting, very exciting.

Galarza: I think, I don't know--I'm very grieved by this assault on me and I'm very, very much concerned. It's going to cost me a lot of money to defend myself. But on the other hand, I think it does offer us an opportunity to raise some issues about urban policy.

Morris: It almost seems as if the legal route is, before the courts, is almost a method of choice in mid-1970. Thank you so much for this conversation. I'm sorry I have to leave for another appointment.

V SOCIAL ACTION AND REACTION

[Date of Interview: December 7, 1978]##*

Studio Laboratory Program and Strategy, 1972-1975

Morris: So your feeling is that the Consortium did reinforce the stratification rather than introduce new approaches to education.

Galarza: It was bound to because what was really shaping up was, in a sense, a confrontation between two ways of looking at education. I've got a little more to say about that a little later.

But the Consortium became an administrative device by which federal funds were channeled to the small local units. So the important thing was to find out who was running the Consortium, what decisions they were making, who they were talking to in Washington, in short, what were the politics behind the distribution of funds, and which meant three years trying to observe and to, in a sense, participate in that.

Morris: We, the Studio Lab?

Galarza: That's right. The Consortium then becomes a kind of a manifold through which funds are distributed, with very little effort to change the structure of education. So in that sense, bilingual education, funded by the federal government, became a reinforcement of the stratification of public education in this community.

Morris: Had anybody in your group tried to get some input into the writing of the federal legislation?

Galarza: No, we didn't. We were too involved. In order to accomplish that-- talking about federal legislation--you really need a lobby. You need somebody in Washington, you need to know people at those levels. You need to be able to go to meetings--they may be called in Washington, they may be called in Maine, they may be called anywhere in the country.

- Galarza: Unless you're there, and unless you have within the federal administration people who are sympathetic--who are not impressed with the state of education in the United States, especially as it relates to minorities--there's no way to stay in touch.
- Morris: But am I right that you were involved with the effort to finally, successfully shut down Public Law 84 on the bringing in of--
- Galarza: That was a very different issue--that had to do with immigration.
- Morris: Right. But it was possible, eventually, to get some input into those discussions?
- Galarza: Yes, but that would take us into an analysis of what was happening with respect to the immigration problem. And that, I've written books about.
- Morris: There wasn't any interaction between that apparatus and the education?
- Galarza: There was none.

From the very beginning, the bilingual projects of the federal government very clearly show that the federal bureaucracy was taking the easy way out. What's the easy way out? You come to an understanding with the local administrators. You work out programs with them and then you turn them loose!

You don't monitor them. You don't hold them to a certain philosophic commitment as to what education is all about. So there was no change. Federal intervention in this matter simply strengthened and reinforced what had become a progressively worse deal for the minority--Mexican minority. Our only chance to make a dent on that was local.

If we had had sympathetic administrators downtown, people who agreed with us that change needed to be made--there was something wrong with a system that turned out literally hundreds of dropouts every year among these kids--that the curriculum was stultified--it was stratified--it was not being responsive--we might have had a hearing. But these are not the kind of people who are running the schools. These are not the administrators who are making the decisions. So we had to break with them. We were on separate tracks.

When it finally became apparent that we were not interested in bringing federal reinforcements to a situation--a local situation which was already bad--which was already negative--the crisis was not long in coming, and it shaped up over the Consortium.

Morris: Were there any--?

[brief phone interruption; tape resumes]

Morris: You were talking about the break with the Consortium.

Galarza: That break had to come because of the way we organized the Studio Laboratory. We were hoping to make it into a demonstration of--a very modest demonstration of what is possible within all the headlocks that have been placed on education for all kids--not just Mexican kids.

Morris: The Studio Laboratory is a separate entity that--?

Galarza: Let me explain that now. The Studio Laboratory came about because in 1971, and increasingly in 1972, a number of teachers approached us from various school districts where Mexican kids were highly concentrated. They were genuinely worried about what they saw--newcomers flooding the schools, the curriculum materials were inadequate, and the kids were dropping out--and the result was after we had private talks with these teachers--twenty, twenty-five teachers--we decided to organize a seminar of some--I think there were eight in the seminar from various districts.

Morris: Who's we?

Galarza: Myself. I offered to teach the seminar. They had a problem--they were not--most of them were married teachers, had families and kids to take care of--so the only way they could get together was for me to find the money to pay them for release time.

I asked the Whitney Foundation--I wrote a proposal for the Whitney Foundation, which was accepted. With this money, we started the Studio Lab seminar in late '72.

Morris: You're been a Whitney Fellow yourself, haven't you?

Galarza: No. I just knew people there.*

*In 1970, Dr. Galarza suggested that the Whitney Foundation become interested in a team approach that "linked the community with university resources. This was adopted and he, therefore, is the 'father' of the present John Hay Whitney Foundation [fellowship] program." Letter from Archibald L. Gillies, President, John Hay Whitney Foundation to Regional Oral History Office, June 2, 1976.

Galarza: The Whitney Grant was distributed among these teachers and we carried on the seminar for nearly a year. We met once a week with the exception of holidays and we talked about all these things--who these children were, what the difficulties were, what materials were there available, what materials should be developed, and so on.

These were very stimulating meetings. We met about three hours every week.

Morris: Were these teachers who were in the seminar mostly Mexican American themselves?

Galarza: Yes, and they came from different schools. I think there were, at the beginning, eight different school districts represented. We sent out word that the seminar would be organized. We organized it, started the meetings, and with the Whitney money, we paid those teachers so that they could have substitutes.

Morris: So this was during the normal--

Galarza: It was during the school day.

Morris: Where did you meet?

Galarza: It was quite obvious that unless we did that, these teachers were not going to be able to take time out. They were already under such pressure that we realized it would have to be a subsidized thing. Our hope was that if we could demonstrate the effectiveness of such an approach, that it would be picked up by the district, or by somebody.

Morris: As in-service training type of thing.

Galarza: That's right.

Morris: Were these teachers that you had had as students yourself?

Galarza: No, they were strangers to me. I knew them and they knew of us, but it wasn't a close relationship. So we set up the seminar. We met at the School of Education sometimes, district offices sometimes, school sometimes.

The seminar got through the first year all right, because we had sufficient Whitney money, but at the end of the first year, we began to run out of funds. We got some supplementary funds from the Whitney Foundation, but already I could see that we would have to be thinking very seriously about the immediate future.

Galarza: The second year, when we had run out of money, we got a subsidy from the Model Cities people. With that money, we continued our seminar and in fact we expanded it. At one point, our weekly meetings of teachers in service numbered over twenty.

Morris: Model Cities required a neighborhood election for its board. Were there many Mexican Americans in the county?

Galarza: Yes, there were. They were interested in developing a program in bilingual education that would be responsive to the children in their neighborhoods whom they knew well. They knew what the problems were.

Morris: Did they see it as something that Model Cities would run?

Galarza: No. This was just an emergency grant which we got for a year. Just enough money to carry on. By that time we had a Studio Lab staff--we had a Studio Lab program based upon our experience during the first year, and out of it came a program which was based on, first of all, changing the curriculum in the elementary grades that these people were teaching, so that it would be more responsive to the needs of children as we saw those needs--by actually visiting them, by seeing them in their schools, and so on. So curriculum change was an important goal of the Studio Lab.

Morris: In what directions did you--?

Galarza: I'll tell you about that in a minute.

We also wanted to change the emphasis on academic techniques--reading, writing, arithmetic we thought were not as important as the arts in lower grades. So we had a very strong program emphasizing creative arts, especially for the first and second graders.

Morris: How did that concept evolve? That the arts were more important for young children?

Galarza: It was a personal belief that Mrs. Galarza and I have always had.

Third, we believed we had to work in the direction of teaching parents also to move along with the Studio Lab so that eventually there would be, in these school districts, groups of parents who understood what was going on--what we were trying to do--and would support it--because we hoped that in the district that we were touching, there would be at least one school that would be willing to push this experiment on a local level. We didn't believe in concentration or centralization of program.

Galarza: Fourth, we had a very strong emphasis on language--on the Spanish language teaching--for two reasons. First, because we felt that many of these children who were moving into the community were monolingual Spanish speakers. The schools, we felt, had to make a very strong effort to teach them in their own language and to train people to be competent to do that.

Secondly, we felt that in the upper grades, there should be some provision in the curriculum for continuing specialized instruction in Spanish so these kids could become proficient in it.

Morris: So that if you were native Spanish-speaking, you would keep and improve your Spanish in Spanish literature and all that good stuff.

Galarza: That's right.

The final premise of our program was teacher training. We felt that the public school staff in this community is, of course, a product of the kind of teacher training that we have and that these teachers had to be helped to understand the sociological factors that enter into this whole complicated story and to be helped to learn how you develop learning materials that are responsive to the children that they're teaching.

Those were the five premises of our Studio Lab program at the end of 1973. We were working on all of these things at the Studio Lab. The most people we ever had at the Studio Lab was seven staff members. We were all teachers. We met with these people regularly in training classes over the year.

We were given the use of a set of classrooms down at Hoover Junior High School, which had been condemned. In those three rooms, we set up a library, an art center, a laboratory, a lending service, and so on. And that's the way it looked at the end of 1974 and early 1975. That was the Studio Lab program and strategy, and we brought to it teachers that were in the elementary schools in the district that were highly impacted with these Mexican kids.

Morris: Did they, by then, have released time?

Galarza: We paid for that released time.

Morris: You did--all the way through.

Could you tell me who the other people on your staff were--those seven who worked for you?

Galarza: Mrs. Galarza, Mrs. Larson, Mrs. Molina, Arlene Bersentes, Craig Young, Elias Alizarde, Javier Salazar, Robert De Villar--people who came and went altogether gave us about twelve.

Morris: So you had some people full time and some people part time?

Galarza: That's right. Of course we all had to work for peanuts because the budget for seven people was \$70,000 a year.

Morris: Was the space at least donated?

Galarza: Yes, we were given free residence--free occupancy by the district.

That's what happened during those two years. The Studio Lab reached its peak in theory, in structure, in contacts, in results, materials--we had people coming in there from all over the county for help. From those visits, we found out that what we were facing in these member districts was typical of the whole county. No materials--no special instruction--no adaptation of the curriculum --and no inservice training. That was generally the situation. We could see it intensely here in this district.

In those two years, I would say we had active contact with--I would say conservatively, some sixty-five to seventy teachers who came regularly to the sessions and who received materials on loan or by gift from the Studio Lab. We felt that in the spring on 1975, we had every right to expect a very serious consideration from the district of this approach as an alternative to what was going on.

Morris: What was the official district program in bilingual education?

Galarza: That was it.

Morris: What you were providing through the Studio Lab. Other teachers were doing just what they had always been doing in the classroom?

Galarza: That's right.

Morris: What was the district doing through the Consortium?

Galarza: It wasn't funded before '75. All of this was a time when we had to shag money from wherever we could get it to keep it going.

Morris: Did you, in the Studio Lab, have any federal funding?

Galarza: No.

Morris: Just the Whitney?

Galarza: Toward the end, the district picked up part of the tab. They gave us quarters down at Hoover and picked up some of the salaries, but that was a time, in the spring on 1975, when no one knew just how things were going to go, and they were keeping us alive just in case we needed to be continued.

Galarza: But in 1975 certain things were happening. For one thing, it became clear that federal monies would be available. So the district, as the records of the time show, made plans to consolidate the requests for money from Washington in one program. This was submitted on behalf of the ten districts in the early summer of 1975.

They asked for and received over a million dollars. The grant-- I don't know the date it was given, but it was certain by the end of the summer in 1975 and it was then that we realized that the Studio Lab had not made any impact on the policymakers of the district.

Morris: Had you, in working with those sixty-five to seventy teachers, been able to do any evaluation or assessment of what kind of impact it had in their classrooms?

Galarza: No. We visited them--we helped them--they brought problems to the Studio Lab--we worked intensely on materials which were designed to respond to their needs.

If that had continued another two or three years, we would have had such a thing--such a nucleus--but it ended too soon.

Morris: And two years is a short time to judge what the child will have learned.

Galarza: So when the grant was nailed down--the federal grant--we were notified that the Studio Lab would be discontinued. So the summer months and the early fall of 1975 were really spent in preparation for liquidating the Studio Lab. We moved out--I think it was in October--we moved out of the junior high school in October of 1975, and the Consortium took over lock, stock and barrel.

From that time on, we kept our collection of materials that we had developed--we had quite a quantity of them--and we began to distribute them to districts. People would come down and pick up boxes and packages and take them home.

Morris: From the member districts of the Consortium?

Galarza: Yes. And others who were not.

That's the short history of our effort. If I were to summarize the reasons for the failure of the Studio Lab: number one, we were not bringing the kind of money into the district that was necessary to maintain this program on that scale for any length of time.

Number two, the administrators of the school districts were not genuinely looking at the problem from the standpoint of the children: who they were, or what their problems or what their difficulties

Galarza: were in learning, and what some changes--some of them drastic--radical changes would have to be made to make it a learning situation for them.

Number three was the type of administrator who was appointed or was approved for the Consortium. They were not--

[brief interruption as Mrs. Galarza enters]

Galarza: So the third reason was that the type of administrator that Washington was looking for was not at all responsive to what we were doing. They were more concerned with how you get funds from HEW--how long will it take to get renewal of these funds, rather than what are the local problems, district by district, that have to be faced, and what to do about them.

This all came to a crisis in the fall of '75, and the breakup of the Studio Lab was the result.

Later Retrenchment and Reinforcement of Traditional Administration

Morris: Were there efforts made to influence the district's decision?

Galarza: No--I didn't make any.

Morris: Had you worked with Ms. Martinez before she was appointed?

Galarza: No, I did not. It was a typical bureaucratic operation from top down. Since then, the Consortium has remained nominally in charge of the program, but this past year there have been very serious limitations on it. Funds have been cut back drastically--mostly by reason of Proposition 13--staff has been reduced--I'm not giving you first-hand information now because I don't know what the situation is, but these are impressions I gather from talking to people.

The district is not publicizing its bilingual programs.

Morris: Because there isn't much of anything?

Galarza: Maybe that's the reason. They're not too proud of what they're doing or maybe they're waiting for--in any event, it's in low gear now. What will happen from now on is--the federal government may continue subsidizing these districts with grants and without exercising any determined leadership of what education should be like--how it should change, or what are the needs--what responses are adequate, and so forth. Washington's too far away. It can't be done that way.

Morris: Is there any supporting state legislation?

Galarza: [softly] No. State legislation has its own bilingual requirements, but they don't exercise any control.

Morris: What about the State Department of Education? Is there any kind of technical support or leadership?

Galarza: No leadership. I don't think that, conditions being what they are, there's likely to be any effective state leadership, because it means money--it means expense--it means subsidizing these programs.

Morris: Is it noticeably more expensive to provide elementary education as you've described it as it is to do it the way it's being done?

Galarza: I don't think so. I think that you'd have to spend your money in different ways than they're spending it now. No--it goes back--how you use your money and how you distribute your resources depends upon what you consider to be education--what is the education of a child? And once you've made that decision, then you set about changing the curriculum, providing the materials, offering teachers the kind of retraining they need and they're ready to accept--and none of that has happened--and I don't think it's going to happen.

I think the retrenchment, the economies that are being enforced now, are such that everywhere you look, there's retrenchment--there's retreat from facing the facts as they are: What are the children like? What are they up to? What's happening to them? It's too radical a change in point of view. That's why I responded as I did to the young lady who just called. She was at the meeting of this seminar.

She wanted me to come down and make another plea to the chairman and the panel. They have some federal people there. I refuse to do it.

Morris: You don't find hearings like that helpful when the federal government comes to San Jose?

Galarza: No, I don't. I've been through twenty years of this--why should I plan to help them?

Morris: They why do they come out and hold hearings?

Galarza: This is part of the ceremonial process you hold here so you can go back and say to Congress, yes, we held hearings in twenty cities and we have a transcript of what they said and this is what we decided to do. They've already made their decisions. So I'm not about to waste what little time I have left in going through the same motions.

Galarza: We made what I think was a very determined--a very costly--and a very carefully planned effort to change the system modestly, but in fact, it didn't work.

The history of this hasn't been too well examined by people, but the records are around--they're scattered in the districts.

Morris: Did you keep any samples of the kinds of materials that you developed or document them?

Galarza: No, not really. We scattered them as fast as we could--because they soon became outdated, you see.

There's a mistaken notion--and this is one of the things that we had to combat--that education is carried on through the use of materials that were developed in the 1900s by people who at that time were teaching. I don't believe that. I believe that children live in their own environment, they have stimuli to which they respond, and new materials should reflect the life they're living--

Morris: Today.

Galarza: --so that the school is relevant to them--and that you have to change administration--change curriculum--do whatever you need to do to make schools responsive in that way. You should do it.

But the people who are running American schools, at least in this community, don't believe in that. If you look at the changes in budgeting that have been approved this year, you find that the new budget for '78-'79 simply reinforces the traditional concepts of administration of the public schools. In this district it means \$75-\$80 million in San Jose District alone.

Morris: How many children are there roughly in the--?

Galarza: I don't know now. I should think it would be over 30,000.

Morris: That's a lot of children.

Were the Mini Libros part of the materials you developed for the Studio Lab?

Galarza: We tried to get them used, but didn't succeed. The district wouldn't buy them.

Morris: How did you come to write those charming books?

Galarza: We were interested in--we knew that one of the many deficiencies in responding to the children was the absence of materials that would appeal to them, especially in the lower grades. I wrote those books in the hopes that those would be a way of appealing--of making the curriculum experiences appealing to the children.

We've sold them outside besides. This is one district where we have not sold the books.

Morris: Was there any interest in having them just available for parents to buy for their own children?

Galarza: Not much.

Morris: Were some overtures made to talk to the teachers?

Galarza: Oh yes, plenty, plenty. So, we're now to section 4 of your outline here, where do we stand now? I think, first of all, we're in a retrenchment period. Bilingual education is more than ever a fringe activity. The staff has been reduced. I don't know whether the new proposal has been approved--I daresay it has been--by Washington.

They're asking for, I think, over a million dollars again, to be distributed among the various districts that are members of the Consortium. I don't think there's any clear philosophy of where bilingual education should be going, and there's nobody I know of around town who is trying to use bilingual education as an opportunity to give the instructional system a little different slant--make it more responsive. There may be, but I don't know such people.

Our original theory of--our hope, rather, that bilingual education might be in a sense an opportunity to break through the hard, petrified layers of administrative practice and teaching practice has not worked out. And it's understandable. It's a big system. It has hundreds of teachers. It has administrators who are deep into their jobs. They've been there for years and they're not about to raise a new crop of new problems by doing the things that we were trying to do--so that's where we stand on that.

Morris: That's fascinating, because there's also a line of educational theory that innovation is a good thing in education.

Galarza: Yes, but I think that's a lot of talk. The people who are saying that never--those that I have met and talked with at length--never get down to the resistance in a particular district that there is to change. There is resistance to change--no doubt about it.

- Morris: How about the teachers that came through your seminars and the Studio Laboratory?
- Galarza: Oh, we've lost track of them.
- Morris: No sense of whether or not they are continuing to use your methods.
- Galarza: No. We hear from them occasionally--from a few--and they are trying but--it's unfair to ask a single teacher to try to change a system. There was a team of us trying to do that and we failed.
- At its peak, the Studio Lab probably had oh, twenty, twenty-five teachers and six or seven instructors, and a number of parents--some thirty-five or forty people who were influential, who knew where they were going, who were courageous, who took the rap. Now you're asking one teacher in the school district to do this by himself. It's impossible! It can't be done.
- Morris: When you say take the rap, were there pressures on the Studio Laboratory to do things differently?
- Galarza: Yes, we were abolished.
- Morris: That's a pretty final kind of--
- Galarza: Yes, that's a pretty large kind of pressure, isn't it? [chuckles]

Teacher Training

- Morris: What kind of success did you have with involving parents in your program?
- Galarza: We got some to come to the Studio Lab to visit us, and we met a number of them, but we never reached the point where we were able to--we neither had the money nor the funds to move beyond teacher training and actual curriculum materials development into each district. There were ten districts in the Consortium. That would have meant ten efforts going on in to the community to support these teachers--to give them assistance to change and to adapt--to make education in each district come alive for those kids. That was asking too much.

We tried it for a while, but it broke down. So, where we are now, in the first place is a retrenchment on account of--well, due to the conservatism of the times and cutbacks in budget. The administrators have not changed. They're the same people who've

Galarza: been running the system for a hundred years. They're not--we gave them a very clear choice of alternatives. We said, "This is the Studio Lab. You can come and see it operating. This is what we do. This is how we do it. And this is where we would go if we had your support."

I wrote a report in '73 spelling all this out--parent participation, all the rest of it. That was the peak of our activities, but we found no takers.

Now, another thing that we failed in was the unresponsiveness of the School of Education.

Morris: At San Jose State?

Galarza: Yes. They knew what we were doing but instead of moving in behind us or with us into the breach and challenging the system, the School of Education simply resorted to asking for federal money for its own program.

Morris: In bilingual training?

Galarza: Yes. And all they do is reinforce the present administration of the system.

So we failed on that high level. That was critical because the new teachers we hoped would grow out of this would be teachers with their credentials, with their certificates granted by the School of Education. Once they got through that system, they would come to us and weep--how inadequate the system is, kids were falling out--they were dropping out--the same old story, generation after generation. And that's the way it is now. It's not going to change because the administrators of the School of Education have, as their predecessors in the district, have taken the easy way out--federal grants.

With the money they collect from taxpayers now, they could make drastic changes in the system--if you spend it differently. But they're not about to.

Morris: Do the young people in the Mexican-American community think of teaching as a valuable and useful kind of a career or opportunity?

Galarza: I understand that they're dropping out more from the School of Education. Their enrollment is dropping there. That would indicate a kind of disenchantment in teaching. But I'm out of touch with it now. I'm frequently invited to get back into this brawl. I've had this telephone call this morning and I had two yesterday to attend this seminar. I'm having a meeting tomorrow with a lady who is drawing up some proposal.

Bilingual Education in 1978

Galarza: I take the position that we've gone through the whole gamut of the resistances and we offered alternatives which we thought were sensible and aggressive and creative, and they were turned down. So, we leave these institutions to their own devices. What little time I have left to live or to think or to act is not going to be spent or wasted in continuing this dialogue.

Morris: You feel you have demonstrated--

Galarza: Yes, I've had my share of these. I know what the situation is and I'm now in favor--as far as I'm concerned--the system can just rot on its haunches. It will come. It's not possible for education to survive and to be useful the way it's going now. And bilingual education is only one part of it.

Morris: And your feeling is that if an institution doesn't change, it will deteriorate?

Galarza: Sure. It's bound to. Because it doesn't stand still. It responds to political changes, political shifts, economic changes, economic shifts. In this area that we've been talking about, I would anticipate that in the next ten, fifteen years, there will be twice, maybe three times the population of Mexican Americans in the state of California that there is now.

Morris: So that in some school districts there will be more children of that kind than other backgrounds.

Galarza: Some districts in east San Jose are terrible impacted. The only answer that these people in administration can come up with, "Give us more money and let's do busing."

Morris: I was wondering if that had been considered.

Galarza: They're talking about it and they're asking for money. They're finagling--every district--they're doing all the things except to look at the problem from a human point of view. Start with children. This is what they're experiencing. This is where they live. This is how much money you have to spend. How do we spend it so that these youngsters are helped out of this impasse? That hasn't been done.

Adding to the amount of funds available isn't necessarily going to improve the situation.

Morris: Have you felt that all the way along?

Galarza: There was a time when I felt a little that funds--even matched funds--diverted in this direction would eventually make a change. The experiment probably wasn't of long enough duration to be a legitimate answer to the question I raised. In my judgment, those seven or eight years were spent in building up this operation. The way it was destroyed--the political techniques that were used--tell me that until there is literally a revolution in educational groups of this country, this is going to happen over and over again.

Congress can appropriate \$300 million for bilingual education. It will still be spent by the same people in the same way.

Morris: The political techniques were within the education community.

Galarza: Yes. That's why I thought you might be interested in dropping in and listening to what's going on down there. This is really a very interesting cross-section of what's going on. Here are these federal people listening to the ceremonial.

Morris: Yes, I understand the ceremonial aspect.

Galarza: You will be able to sense there that the guidelines are up--they'll give you a copy of them if you ask for them. They've already printed the proposed guidelines and they'll repeat what has been printed before.

Morris: One last question about what I've been learning today. Have you kept the papers of the Studio Lab together? Are they still available?

Galarza: No. We redistributed them. Some of them have been given to people at [UC] Santa Cruz who were with us for a year or two.

##

Galarza: We started to reorganize the papers in order to make it more useful for you in the future and to touch all the highlights that should be rounded out in some sort of logical sequence.

What I've done is give a little different order to your topics in the hope that they would make sequence for what you've already got and what you may get in the future from other people.

Why don't we go through this outline and you can ask me questions about it as they crop up? The outline covers all of your subject matter on this letter that you sent me.

Morris: Good.

Galarza: The present state of affairs of bilingual education in this county is, in my judgment, very--well, not quite chaotic, but certainly uncertain. There's been a heavy cutback in staffing. I can't give you the facts because I don't know them, but I know that the central staff of the bilingual program, which I think used to consist of five or six people, is down to I think two or three.

That's the important thing to notice right away.

Morris: Is that because of a change in federal funding?

Galarza: That's partly it, yes, but it's probably because the district is paying out fewer funds for the bilingual program from its own appropriations. That, of course, affects services and staff.

I haven't been in touch with it for over a year now, so I can't answer any questions about what's going on or is not going on, but it's important to notice that change since I talked to you last. A very severe pullback on programming and services that likely will continue on into the spring term.

I don't know whether you have planned any conversations with the Consortium people. They're not giving out much information.

Morris: This is the district Consortium people?

Galarza: Yes. So if you want to update yourself on what's happening on that front, I think the only way to do it would be either to talk to Dr. Knight or Miss Martinez or--

Morris: Dr. Knight is the--

Galarza: Superintendent.

Morris: --superintendent. And the person who's now head of the Consortium?

Galarza: Yes, he's nominally the head of the Consortium. Because the grant is made to the Consortium, of which he is chairman.

Morris: Has Ms. Martinez been with the program since it was begun?

Galarza: Yes, she's been with it some three years now.

Morris: Is she a local San Jose person?

Galarza: She originally was, I think, from Berkeley. Then she moved down here. She moved to Atherton and then she took on this job with the San Jose district. She's been head of the Consortium ever since.

Galarza: I haven't talked with her for a long, long while, so I'm absolutely out of date on the local program. But I do know that there've been very severe cutbacks on it.

Morris: That's always discouraging when you've worked hard to get a program started.

Galarza: What I have here is four sections which are a rearrangement of your material in somewhat historical sequence, so that when you hear the tapes, you can make more sense out of it.

What I have here is, first of all, the general statement on what was happening in the Southwest at the time that bilingual education was established and some considerations. What brought on federal policy--why the federal government intervened, and so forth. The effect of federal legislation on what we had already been doing here, and so on.

Then in the second part here, picking up your material, I want to talk a little bit about the entry of the San Jose district into the bilingual program--why it got into it and how it got into it. Why the Consortium was organized.

Then in the third section, some comments on the Studio Lab itself. I may have told you some of these things before, but in recapitulating, it seems to make sense that I review some of the things that we've talked about before.

Chicano and Black Social Movement and Acculturation

Galarza: In the fourth--closing--part of this conversation, I want to go back and look at the problem of bilingual education from the standpoint of the population of Mexican children itself--why they were in trouble and how the bilingual program might have helped to reevaluate why they were in trouble and possible set up new programs that would meet their needs better than anything that existed before.

That's the outline that I have here. What do you think?

Morris: That sounds good.

Galarza: I'll go through this outline, making my comments on it, and you can interrupt me at any point that you feel you want me to amplify.

Galarza: I think the most important point to make is that in the 1960s, there was a growing awareness that a larger number of Mexicans were moving into the Southwest, into California and Texas and other Southwestern states in numbers that were unprecedented.

This raised problems of all kinds--immigration problems, school problems, employment problems. Since the 1960s, since the middle of the 1960s to the present time, I think you have to think of bilingual education as simply a part of this complex situation. Otherwise, you don't get the focus.

Morris: When you say unprecedented numbers, on what kind of scale?

Galarza: There were in the 1960s, there were very roughly, I would say, some three and a half to four million persons of Mexican ancestry in the Southwest and that number, I judge--this is a pure guess, had probably increased to five and a half to six million now.

Morris: In mid 1970s.

This is over and above, and separate from, the matters of the braceros coming in?

Galarza: Yes, these are people who come here with the hope of staying. A movement of population on such as scale, of course, raises an infinite number of problems. You have to start from there because if you don't, one begins to talk about education as if it were the whole of the problem--or about housing as if there was nothing but housing--or employment as if there were nothing but employment problems.

But we have here a massive move of people from one country to another. When you have mass migrations, of course, you have mass displacements of all kinds. So we're only looking at a piece. It's an important piece, but it's only a piece.

That has continued up till the present time. As a matter of fact, I was reading about a week ago, a newspaper story to the effect that the United States government was going to be less exacting and less demanding as to its vigilance of the border. They're going to let more people in here--not by positive action, but just by not paying attention to the border, which means that the border has become, more than ever, a sieve through which thousands of people are moving more or less permanently.

Morris: What does this say about Mexico? Five and half million people is a large number of people.

Galarza: The Mexican government is, I think, interested in being permissive about its emigration. The Mexican population is growing, I think, at one of the fastest rates of population growth in the world. The official figures that we hear from the Mexican government are to the effect that by 1990, I think they said, Mexico will have a population of somewhere between 85 and 90 million--which is about twice what they had ten years ago.

Unless the Mexican economy expands enormously, it won't have room--it won't have work for these people.

Morris: Sometimes when there's a large movement of people, the comment is made that it's the energetic ones who leave where they are and go to a new area to--

Galarza: Yes, I know. That's been said many times.

Morris: Does that apply, do you think, in this case?

Galarza: Well, I don't think so. Because the pressures are so massive now that not just the hopeful ones and the aggressive ones move--people are forced to move whether they want to or not. I think that's the state we're in now.

I have no idea how many people are migrating yearly--legally and illegally--but I would say that in California, we would expect on an average of maybe 25 to 30,000 newcomers every year.

Morris: How did you happen to pick education as the area that would involve your energies?

Galarza: Because I've been a teacher all my life, but watching things going in the Southwest--a number of things were happening that raised educational issues. One was that the federal legislation of the mid-1950s and into 1960 with the passage of the Elementary and Secondary Education Act, the debates in Congress very clearly showed an awareness that in the Southwest, there would be this very serious problem of absorbing and providing services for really literally thousands of families.

San Jose was a very dramatic demonstration of that. San Jose has been for years a sort of a concentration point for this immigration, so we were right in the middle of it.

Morris: Why San Jose?

Galarza: I think it's people seeking jobs here. So I became interested in it simply because I was a resident of this area and because we had friends who taught and who were constantly discussing the educational problems that were raised when you have these huge masses of people moving into a situation which is totally foreign to them.

Galarza: So the schools were asking these questions: how do you provide services? What kinds of services? At what cost? These were the issues that came up during the sixties in the course of the debates in the House and in the Senate on educational policy.

This was to be expected because of the changes that were happening in Mexico were very drastic from about 1945 on. Population growth became quite a public issue, and the lack of jobs. The needs that the Mexican government saw to increase its exports.

Morris: Of people or material?

Galarza: Of materials--export commodities--in order to balance its economy. So all of these things, naturally led to the debates in Congress in the 1960s, of which we were all aware. As these changes in Mexico became more dramatic, more pressing, the pressure on the border became almost--it increased almost every year. There were more people working at the border. The number of illegal immigrants became quite massive. These were all the effects of a very drastic change that was taking place in the condition of the working class in Mexico.

And so, if you lived in a place like San Jose, you simply had to notice these things. If you were in education, as we were, you naturally heard from your friends--from your colleagues--all of these questions raised as to what do we do with these kids--how long will they be here? What kind of special programs should we have for them? What are their needs?

Morris: These were children who had recently come from Mexico.

Galarza: Yes.

Morris: And spoke only Spanish?

Galarza: Right.

So this was the atmosphere in which these issues became sharper and sharper. And they all led to the debates in Congress that finally produced the Elementary and Secondary Education Act of 1965 and all the amendments that since have been made to that. This is the general background as far as Mexico is concerned.

I also have to mention that up to the 1960s, roughly speaking, there was very little organized response to this problem of Mexican migration. The schools didn't have any bilingual programs. They had no special remedial or service projects for Mexican kids.

Galarza: The federal government was just feeling its way--they heard reports and they heard rumors that in the Southwest there was a concentration of Mexicans going on, but this had been true for year--for generations; it wasn't particularly sensational. But that all began to change in the mid-1960s, and that's when we began to get more awareness in the Department of Labor, for instance--the Department of State--in the state governments. From that time on--from the mid-1960s to the present time--there's been a very gradual kind of soaking up of the nature of the problem. Why are there so many Mexicans here? Why are they coming? Why do they concentrate in the cities? What is their educational background? And so on--and just a multitude of difficulties that arise when you move a huge mass of people from one culture to another.

The result is now we have sort of a response--an institutional response. The federal government--the state government--the local organizations are talking--at least they're aware of the problem. They're talking about it--not that they're doing anything too significant or intelligent about it, but the thing is, they're talking.

Morris: In the 1960s, there was an organization called the Southwest Council.--[of La Raza?]

Galarza: Yes, I'm coming to that--I'll tell you about that a little later here.

Then the other thing to remember is that it was about this time that the black ethnic revolt was coming to a head. That generated a great deal of public discussion, some legislation, Supreme Court decisions, and so on--which at first dealt with the problems of the blacks, but the time was ripe for the same thing to happen among the Mexicans. By the mid-1960s, we had had at least two, maybe three, generations of rather large migration to the Southwest and the second and third generations of this migration were native-born American citizens of Mexican extraction.

They had problems of adjustment--discrimination was rampant among them. As a result of the backlash from the black movement, there very rapidly shaped up what has since been called the Chicano movement. It's now some fifteen years old.

The Chicanos began to notice that the blacks were doing something for themselves. They were taking cases to court, suing here and suing there, demonstrations. This revolt--this protest--rose by degrees and before the end of the sixties, there was actually a Chicano movement led by--not by newcomers--but by the younger people who had been here--who had felt the closing out of the opportunities that they thought were here.

Galarza: So, by the end of the sixties, there was a Chicano movement, and one of the important effects of that movement was that it picked up issues in education and made them very important--brought them to the front. You had sit-ins, or you had students organized, and you had programs proposed. In short, a mass agitation which lasted --well, it's lasted till the present time--not as intense as it was in the early days, but it's still there.

Morris: Would the Chicano movement have started, do you think, if the black ethnic group had not?

Galarza: I think eventually it would have, but the blacks really took the initiative. They led the way, really. Their situation was so bad in the South that it couldn't help but come to a head.

These Mexican young people--people who were young in those days --the sixties--frustrated as they were, began to pick up the example of the blacks.

Morris: Was there any contact between them?

Galarza: I don't think much, no. No, they just read it in the papers and they saw what was going on in their communities. Out of that came program demands--change of curriculum--the push for employment that allowed people into the federal offices and state offices.

What you see in the minority sectors today, especially the Mexican Americans, is the result of those ten or fifteen years of demands for change in the way the Mexicans were treated.

Morris: Who were those young people here in San Jose who took the initiative?

Galarza: There weren't any in San Jose, really. Mostly in the south--people based at the University of California, USC, Claremont, San Diego. This is where the bulk of the Mexican population was concentrated.

Morris: In the Los Angeles area.

Galarza: Yes, that's right.

Morris: And the leadership was coming from Mexican Americans who'd been at one of the universities or were teaching there?

Galarza: Yes, I think so.

In response to these ethnic pressures of the 1960s and seventies, we got, among other things, the bilingual legislation--or the federal legislation which provided the legal basis for bilingual education. That was the situation in the mid-1960s.

Galarza: There were repercussions, of course, to this. As soon as the federal government began to feel concerned and as soon as these federal actions were taken, in California and Texas, there was local interest--Chicanos organized groups of various kinds. Some sort of leadership began to emerge. People began to aspire to public office. They organized politically. In short, they began to move into all the establishment bases, and that's the way they got recognition and some acclaim, and opportunities.

Some ran for office and were elected, and that's the picture now. This is the forefront. Remember, this is the end product of something that's been going on for seventy-five years.

Morris: Seventy-five years.

Galarza: All you see is the front end of a long historical process.

These younger men and women--people like those who are in Washington now--are in the Carter subcabinet--are the product of this long, long process.

Morris: In a sense are they really bicultural? They've kept a sense of their Mexican heritage?

Galarza: They're interested in bicultural development, but they're not really bicultural. One of the things you notice about this advance guard of persons of Mexican ancestry who are a third or even sometimes fourth generation, is that they are naturally bilingual--they are not naturally bicultural. It would be miraculous if they were! They were born here and they were raised here. This is an American environment. They were absorbed. They're acculturated.

They keep talking about bicultural identity, I think, mainly because this was the way to give dramatic punch to the protest. Here we are Mexicans--we're being denied our legitimate heritage, and all that sort of thing. But all this protest was in English!

Morris: Yes, the media would probably not have understood it if it was in Spanish.

Galarza: That's right.

Morris: The contrast is interesting in terms of the Chinese and Japanese families, many of whom have been here two or three generations but seem to have made an effort to have classes and education to keep a family native tradition and life.

Galarza: A number of immigrant groups have done that--the Germans did it in the last century--the Irish did it to a certain extent. But in time, this dwindles. It's very hard for me to imagine a third or fourth generation of Irishmen or Germans, or Mexicans, or Chinese, who remain Irishmen and Germans and Chinese!

The environment is too powerful. They become Americans! And that's the way it should be. They speak English, they feel English, they respond to American pressures, and so they become Americanized. Their insistence upon differentness and their protests against being acculturated by their adopted country is largely for purposes of propaganda.

But it's a propaganda that gets weaker from one generation to the next. You don't hear these people--once they achieve some public recognition--public status--jobs, advancement of some sort, they begin to separate themselves from the base that is continuously refurbished, renewed from Mexico.

There's a big cultural gap between the leadership of any immigrant group and the newcomers. There's no way to keep in touch.

Morris: Does that, then, have an effect on what happens to the young children from Mexico in school, say, in San Jose?

Galarza: The way to observe that is to first of all notice that recently arrived Mexican children are culturally Mexican. They speak Spanish--they don't understand English. The issue then is raised: what are the schools doing to adapt themselves to this transition? It's very rough on these kids.

What changes do they make in school administration to make it easy for a child in the first, second or third grade to recognize--to get into--and to become familiar with this strange environment into which he's been dropped.

Morris: Have they had any school experience, generally, in Mexico before they came?

Galarza: Many of them have, yes. I don't know what the numbers would be, but I would say that possibly 15 to 20 percent of these kids have had some school experience in Mexico. But the bulk of them have not. That raises the question not only what does the child do to adapt himself, but what do the institutions in this country do to meet him halfway to make that transition easy? To tell him this is American and we're using a language in school that you don't understand--so bilingual education might be the answer to a process of adaptation. That's the way I've always viewed it.

Galarza: As the pressure of the Chicano movement became tighter and tighter, American agencies had to respond. You had a federal response, you had a state government response, and you had the local districts' response. A study of those responses is really a study in the sociology of integration.

I know it intimately only here because that's where I lived. But I think it would be fair to say that what we've experienced in San Jose is probably typical of the experience in Texas, in New Mexico--indeed as far east as Kansas and Illinois, where they've had large numbers of Mexicans settle down.

Morris: What's the percentage of the population in San Jose which is Mexican or Mexican descent?

Galarza: It's hard to say, but I would guess that in Santa Clara County, there are probably 150, 160 thousand permanent residents of Mexican ancestry. They're recent comers and old comers--they're second generation--they're third generation.

That's one of the difficult things for people to understand--that you can't just say Mexican American. The years have their effects. They stratify people, even within an ethnic group. There's as much difference between a fourth generation Mexican and a first generation Mexican as there is between a New Englander and a Southerner. They're just two different cultures.

But the Mexican activists--the Mexican Americans--the Chicanos--have a tendency to forget that. Their stress is on the propaganda value of how badly they've been treated by their American hosts. And they're right. The history of discrimination in the Southwest is terrible, and the Chicanos are intent on not letting it be forgotten.

But from that, to what do you do about it--what institutional changes can you bring about so that they are responsive to children--so that changes are made in the schools that result in a better education for these kids who have been displaced, that's an issue which hasn't been addressed.

Federal Impetus and Impact

Morris: How did you go about trying to make a start at it?

Galarza: That brings me to the second item here. With this general background, which of course, is important--because when you talk about bilingual education in San Jose, you have to constantly refer to federal policies--federal funding--federal administrators who dip in and dip out of the scene here.

So you can't divide the subject either into historic periods or social layers, but that's the way the social process is. Generations change and the interplay between them brings about adaptations. That happened in San Jose.

In this community, bilingual education really doesn't come to the fore as an educational issue until 1963 and 1964. By that time, Santa Clara County had a history of--I would say at least a hundred years of adapting itself to the Mexicans. They've been around all this time, but we weren't talking about it!

But in the 1960s, because of these factors that I've mentioned, the San Jose Unified School District got into the act and did so, in my judgment, primarily because for the first time, there were funds available to finance remedial programs of various kinds, and one of them was bilingual education.

Morris: So this impetus came from the federal government?

Galarza: I think so. I think you have to go back to the legislation of the middle 1960s. As soon as the districts throughout the Southwest began to realize that here was a federal resource--at the beginning, there was only about \$30 million--

Morris: For the country.

Galarza: --for the country. Which were parceled out in small grants. This year, there will be \$150 million. I just read the last guidelines for bilingual education, and I think that that's what it says.

Morris: Were you already living in San Jose at this point--in '63, '64?

Galarza: Oh, yes. We moved here in 1943, I think.

Morris: So this has been your home base for all your other activities.

Galarza: Yes. We've been able to observe these things as they happened.

Morris: Wonderful.

Galarza: The San Jose District was among the districts that realized that the Education Act of 1965 provided them with an opportunity to dip into the federal budget and finance special programs, among them bilingual education. That's where you get the beginning of interest and discussion and analysis.

Galarza: By 1972, '73, there was much discussion around the town of the new federal policies and what opportunities they opened for financing these programs, which the local districts were not willing to do. That was the situation in 1972, 1973, 1974.

Morris: Why wasn't the local district prepared to utilize the new money?

Galarza: They weren't interested. Unless somebody financed them, they weren't going to do anything about bilingual education. The need was there but they weren't talking about it.

Morris: Would this be the staff of the district, or the school board, with their contacts with those people?

Galarza: School board--yes, I think so. But as soon as federal funds moved into the picture, there began a--what is now a federal system of meeting these needs, and out of it came the Consortium. The Consortium of Bilingual Education started out--I think we had ten districts joining--a great combination.

The creation of the Consortium very clearly shows how important federal policy is. The money was available to individual districts--each district, presumably, was to prepare its own proposal based on its own needs. But in the late 1960s--early 1970s really--HEW sent out the word that the chances for getting federal funds would be improved if various districts in the community joined hands and submitted a joint proposal.

That's what happened here. The San Jose District--I think it was in 1974--'73 or '74, I'm not sure which--drafted and submitted its own individual program for bilingual education, but it was rejected by HEW. A number of reasons were given at the time--I don't remember them all.

Anyway, the district program was not approved and word got around that if this district got together with other districts in the county, the chances for getting federal money would be greatly improved. So it happened. In the fall of '74 and the spring of '75, a number of meetings were held--mostly in San Jose--to which representatives of various districts were invited. At one point I think there were twelve districts taking part in the conversations.

It finally turned into a consortium of ten districts.

Morris: All in Santa Clara County?

Galarza: Yes. They jointly submitted a proposal in the spring of '75 and it was approved. The nominal proponent of the program was this district--San Jose--but it did so in the name of nine others just

Galarza: as well. They got that year over a million dollars--I think it was a million--forty, fifty thousand--with which bilingual education was launched in this community.

The ten districts were given proportionate shares of the federal grant. A staff was put together, the director was appointed. Some sort of staff training was initiated. There's some documentation down at the district office which gives this whole process--how the Consortium was organized, what they did, what meetings were held, and so on.

The grants were for a year, but the federal government had assured the members of the Consortium that they would be re-funded up to, I think they said five years. That's what they've been doing since. They've been re-funding.

The result was that you had a bilingual education movement, you might call it, embracing major districts of Santa Clara County. This was the Santa Clara District or San Jose District was the East side--your large districts. The staff that was set up was a small one, but it was the staff that directed the whole strategy, allocated the funds, wrote the proposal, and so on.

At that point, the bilingual education then becomes not so much a concern with what kind of kids are we getting in this community, what's their background, what difficulties are they having, how do they adjust to the American system of education, and a whole series of questions were arising. The question became an administrative one. How much money do we get? Who gets the portion of it? And above all, how do we make sure that we get our renewal of our grant next year? That's been the history of bilingual strategy ever since. The way to get a handle on this history is through the Consortium. If you sit down and read the record, talk to people who were in the Consortium, you will understand what happened after that first program was funded. It became an administrative device to get federal money and distribute it among ten different districts rather than an opportunity to break down some of the stratification that had grown up in the system. That was a crucial change.

Morris: I can see that.

##

Morris: Have you kept any of the papers related to the Studio Lab?

Galarza: No. I have been dismantling my papers. They are no use to me anymore. To have them all together here means a continuous drain on my energies, people will come and want me to talk with them about the ideas we developed and want me to reassure them that their hard work and studies will achieve for them a position within the system from which they can work.

Galarza: I have had enough of that. And the time hasn't come yet to make a definitive study of what did and did not happen in bilingual education here in San Jose. The system was entitled to a hearing and we gave it to them. What we have been talking about today is the capstone to a process that started as modest effort to make the school district respond in some way to one sector of its constituents. Without that change which we had hoped for, the dropout syndrome will become more acute, more Chicano students will not complete their schooling, remedial activities will become more important than teaching, and there will be an attendant cost drain as the schools attempt to make up for the lost years when students didn't learn.

The community will continue to change; there will be a new wave of totally Spanish-speaking persons hard-pressed economically in the lowest level of work, congested in East San Jose. The workload will increase, the strain on the schools to help children progress. They are continuing to be exposed to the present system and the problems become more and more acute.

That's the way I see it, anyway. I am out of touch with it. If I can't see even modest results by this time, it is time to get out. The research will come. The district has its materials, Consortium members have theirs. I have placed materials in three different places. With these materials, it will be possible to apply sensible and tough research as to why bilingual education didn't make a difference in this district.

Morris: What do you see happening in this district in the foreseeable future?

Galarza: Federal subsidies will continue and state monies will probably expand, but they will be absorbed by machinery. There will be no change because of the petrification of our social system; as a sociologist, this is a recurring problem in society. When one has had an experience like this, one must do something to try to change the structure. I do not see this as a personal tilt, something directed against myself, but I do see that there must be social change to make a real dent.

These hearings downtown are part of the same picture. There will be some people there as a small demon to raise some of these things. Mostly it is a ritualistic review, a make-believe ceremony. I do not expect anything to happen and I do not plan to speak. I may go down briefly toward the end.

There are enormous gaps in the ability to achieve understanding of what is needed, but they can be filled by others who come along later.

The Continuing Story of Alviso

Morris: What you have told me about bilingual education has been very important and valuable. I would like to come back in a month or so and ask you what lessons are to be learned from your work in Alviso.

Galarza: Oh, my involvement there goes back nearly ten years ago now. It's been two years at least since I've been actively involved. There are new people keeping it going. And it is still an active issue. In these recent years, the parent committee has filed suit against annexation to San Jose and has been pursuing it aggressively. And there have been some concessions.

##

Galarza: Some services to Alviso came through the services of the city of San Jose. I haven't been out to all these in nearly two years. The report which I wrote--which you have--plus some correspondence which the committee has out there, plus the record of some recommendations which I've made to them--which is all in their files --it seems to me that that is a place where you could pick up to make an interesting story and a continuous story of this issue or the integration of a community.*

I deliberately stayed away from that because after ten years of putting it together and getting as far as we did, I don't want to be drawn back into a battle in which I have really no authority. I gave up on my position in that group of people. I told people that I knew less and less of the situation. I don't know what the state is doing about all this--I don't know what they're doing.

I don't want to interfere with second-hand judgments, because the chances there are that something might come out of this long battle--and I think so--in ways that are not present in the documents. There's still hope there.

Morris: That's fascinating. That reinforces my wish to hear what you would like to say about what you were doing there when it happened. We can keep the tapes for a period of time and not make them generally available.

*"The Crisis of a Barrio," Mexican-American Community Services Agency, San Jose, August, 1973. Copy in Chicano Studies Library, UC Berkeley.

Galarza: I don't want to do that because it means keeping up with it and it means going back over the record. It's all in the papers; I gave them all my files. I did that deliberately.

Bringing the Alviso story up to date would mean my reviewing a lot of unfinished business. Things that must have happened that I don't know anything about. I know they've happened because there's a group up there aggressively pushing. I'd say there are about a dozen people out there who have constituted themselves into a committee, a pro-Alviso committee, and they're in touch with the federal government. They've filed a suit. They have the transcripts and they have an attorney who we helped finance three years ago.

I'm very reluctant to get myself into another review of the past because that review is still underway, and to which I've made my contribution in my report which they have, and the documents and the files which are out there, and the contacts which we have had with individuals. After all, this is the end product of what you might call a ten-year training course I've given those people. It's a long, long time.

The Alviso story is going to be a continuing story for some years to come, as this is not. My judgment is that this is finished. It's finished in the sense that you will only take continuous follow-up on the remissions of these people, but nothing's going to be done.

I hope I'm wrong. But I have no intent to straighten it out. And on Alviso--do you know people out there?

Morris: I've read some of the materials that are in the Chicano Studies Library.

Galarza: There is a committee out there--a committee of old residents who have met with me innumerable times and whose course I have helped to guide over the years. The important thing about Alviso is that the controversy is still worth maintaining. The issues are unresolved.

As long as that's true, you'd better spend your time with people who are trying to do something about it. And I don't want to do that. My time on Alviso is now nearly twelve years as a volunteer, and that's plenty to do on one committee. Plenty. Besides, I can't influence the course of events--I know that.

Morris: Why are the issues still open in Alviso in terms of municipal--

Galarza: There's a group out there that's strategizing, a moving group. It goes to board meetings, it goes before the council. It's raising money. It's bringing young people into the picture whom I don't know--I haven't met.

Morris: And that hasn't developed in relation to education?

Galarza: No.

Morris: With all the children who have parents who have an interest in--?

Galarza: The Studio Lab was an effort to do that. I explained why we failed. I don't have the same view toward the Studio Lab that I have toward Alviso. Alviso's still a live situation.

Once in a while, they call me. They want me to go to a board meeting or downtown to appear before the council, and I decline to do it.

Personal Manifesto

Galarza: There is a limit to what you can ask one individual to do, and I think that limit has been reached with me. Fortunately, we have taken the precaution of leaving a record in various places--in Alviso, in San Francisco, Berkeley, Santa Cruz. So I don't feel that these are blank pages that still have to be written by me.

In fact, the whole theory on which I operated for years is that if I wrote books in detail, with documentation listed, and bibliographies, that that would be my contribution to the history of my time. But I keep getting calls from people who keep saying to me, "Come and teach. Come and give us a lecture. Teach us this. Fill in these gaps."

With all the young Chicanos who are in this now, who are taking courses, who are going into graduate school, who are looking for things to do, I'm saying to them, "The system is still there. If you're young and energetic and if you agree that something's got to be done, go do it! You have enough of a background in the records I've left behind to give you a start."

But this is a tough assignment! The idea of reading the past in order to do something about the present and the future, is not something that you learn in institutions.

Morris: The kind of energy and dedication you've put in it is probably a little terrifying to some people who haven't--

Galarza: That's right, and I want to keep them terrified.

Morris: They may wonder if they can put in it what you have.

Galarza: That's right. Experiencing that terror is part of their education. Because it is a terrible thing to have spent most of your life working with people--with children, with adults, with parents--coming to a peak of experience as we did in the Consortium and the Studio Lab, and to be forced by circumstances to realistically analyze a social system that's there in front of you--it's terrible! It takes a kind of grit that the schools of education--graduate schools--don't tell you anything about.

You have to experience the awfulness of a stratified social system that will not become human.

Morris: Even though it's made up of individual human beings.

Galarza: That's right.

Morris: Is it also terrifying to look at a social system and see that it's rigidified and needs change, from the aspect of how do you make a start?

Galarza: I made my start. In my case, my life is well enough known to a number of people through my books, my writing, my letters, in the documentation I've left behind. You see, I've always had this concern for thirty-four years that this might be significant to people who follow me.

I'm not in the position that most people are who talk into your microphone. What I say into your mike is really a fringe benefit because the people who have left a record in oral history are not people who have written their course. They're not. I know many of them. And they're glad of the opportunity to live in oral history because they haven't taken the time nor had the interest nor the skill nor the opportunity to leave a record of documents and papers behind them. I have. And they are in archives.

In time, if these issues remain alive, it will not be difficult for them--for my successors--to find out from me--from what I've written--what happened and my views of what happened--my appraisal--my analysis--it's all there. Some of it is still too scattered, I'm afraid--but it's there.

This is what I find in young graduate students. They shrink when I talk to them this way.

"You want me to write a dissertation of what happened to the Studio Lab? You want me to go to Santa Cruz and talk to those people? You want me to shag teachers down who are now in Los Angeles --who are scattered all over the state? I can't do this. It's too much! I've got to have my dissertation in by next June!" I say, "Fine. Get your dissertation."

Galarza: The terror which these people face is very real. They know that the reason why their Ph.D. degrees are becoming less and less a passport into a profession is because of the stratification that happened.

Morris: The institutional structure.

Galarza: That's right. And there are young men and women here in San Jose--fine young men and women--very capable--some of them have been my students who are now facing that terror. They apply for jobs. They're turned down. They're not told why. They go back and take graduate courses. They apply again. They're turned down. They finally settle--I know of one young man in the community who has a master's in social work and some advanced courses at the school of education here--he's now washing dishes for a living. That's terror.

I haven't experienced this terror in that way. I have been very, very fortunate in my lifetime in the things that I have done--the opportunities that I have had to understand what I was involved in, but I still sense that it's a terrorizing experience to finish your graduate work, to know that you're competent, to be technically good in your chosen profession, and to be told that there's no room for you in this society.

In San Jose alone, the numbers of such young men and women--I don't know how many there are, but I've talked to at least a dozen--who are now scrounging, baby-sitting, washing dishes, taking graduate courses over and over and over again. It's from this kind of a fringe of rejects, social rejects, that there will come, I hope, a very strong response to the sealing off of opportunities that is going on, and here's an example of how it happens.

Morris: How do they find their niche to make an attack on--?

Galarza: For one thing, they think that talking to me will help, but I stay away from that kind of conversation because I've talked to them about these matters innumerable times. There is a point at which conversation becomes a sedative. "I know Galarza. If I go back and talk with him, I know what he'll tell me and he'll make me feel good, and this will help me until the next crisis. Then I'll go back and talk with him again." This is a cycle that these people go through. I don't intend to baby them along.

I feel that if there's ever an opportunity for me to say something that will break the crust of this resistance, I'd be glad to do so. But going to congressional hearings, and appearing before boards, and talking to these people who are encased in their professional precincts, is useless.

Galarza: This is the real crux of the future. The increasing numbers of these people who have paid their dues to the system.

Morris: They've gone through the education--

Galarza: They've submitted to the requirements and now they're being told that "There is no room for you."

Morris: Is what I'm hearing that it's not clear yet where the opportunities to make the action is?

Galarza: To me it isn't. Short of a crisis that will bring enough of these people together and force them to change institutional arrangements--but I don't see that happening. The schools in this district--the administrators are busy trying to find ways and means to increase the size of classes, and the teachers' organizations are busy trying to find reasons why they should accept these new students in their classes.

Morris: Is there any possibility that the financial strictures might be an opportunity, in that if there's less money for the governmental institutions, people may find other ways of trying to accomplish change in education?

Galarza: Some of that is going on, and I dare say, it will continue, but this will affect only a small proportion of economically--families who are economically fairly able to face the crisis. There are people here who are making \$25, \$30 thousand dollars a year who can afford a private school. Whether the private school will meet the needs of the kids is another question I haven't thought about. But there will be a fringe of people who are able to escape the penalties. I doubt that they're more than a very small percentage. The bulk of these kids will be left to the devices and the maneuvers and the politicking of the people who run the system, and the system has got to protect them, first of all.

Morris: Protect the children?

Galarza: No--protect the administrators. They raise their salaries instead of cutting them. They refuse to touch the basic issues that are depriving these children of the only opportunity they'll ever have to make themselves competent citizens.

I may not live long enough to see a revulsion against the situation, but I do know that talking to seminars and giving courses and appearing before committees--I do know that I spent a lifetime doing that, and this is the result. This is the end product of that. I don't see, with the little time that I have left, I should continue to tread that mill.

Morris: I quite agree with you. I was seeking for my own illumination-- not asking you to go back to--

Galarza: The Alviso situation is different in that if you want to keep abreast of that, I think you practically have to meet the people on this committee who are--they meet somewhat regularly. What they've done in the past two years, I don't know.

They call me up occasionally and want me to give them more training programs. But their training is pretty adequate, I think. They make smart moves and adequate strategies come out of their doing. They're not going to be plastered over and they'll survive.

It's just that I don't want to be drawn back into more meetings and putting into it whatever meager resources we, my family, have been able to set aside for this over the years. In other words, I think in Alviso we've done our job. We've finished and there's nothing more we can do.

At the Studio Lab we didn't do our job, which failed for the reasons I've described, but I have no intention to let these people absorb and really command the rest of my life. No intention whatsoever.

Morris: I think you're entitled to relax.

I did not mean to take as much of your time this morning, but I really appreciate it.

Galarza: Well, we covered the outline, which is what I wanted to do.

Morris: Thank you.

Galarza: I'll keep your letter here. I'll keep it and add it to the other notes that we have. Now, do you want to drop in and visit these people?

Morris: I would like to if you tell me how to get there.

Galarza: The hearings are being held at the student union at San Jose State.
[end of interview]

Interviewer's Note

At Dr. Galarza's urging, an effort was made to include comment on the then-current state of bilingual education in the San Jose area by interested citizens or education professionals. When the interviewer arrived, after some search, at the San Jose State University

Student Union room where the meeting was being held, there was about half an hour's wait for the next session to begin. About fifteen people were seated around long tables loosely arranged in a hollow square. Eventually a quite interesting film was shown of various bilingual programs around the country; some for Spanish-speaking children, some for American Indian children.

No materials on the hearing or other aspects of bilingual education were available, and there was no evidence of arrangements for members of the public to speak.

Transcribers: Ann Enkoji, Marie Herold
Final Typist: Matthew Schneider



ERNESTO GALARZA
at National Catholic Conference
1977

Photo by Esteban Solis

VI THE MINI-LIBROS*

[Date of Interview: March 10, 1981]##

Evolution of the Mini-libros

Galarza: One main purpose of these books was to give teachers material that would be attractive to the children, first of all, and secondly, would be easy to teach. I was also anxious to get away from the stereotypes of language teaching that had grown up during the years. And I had hopes that the interest in bilingual education would carry these books to the point where enough of them could be sold to make it possible to develop a library. But when we had done these twelve, why I found that the interest in bilingual education was declining and that the schools were not buying in quantities sufficient to justify our continued effort to finance these.

So the project wound up with twelve titles instead of eighteen, which we had projected. And those are the twelve with which we stopped publication.

Beard: In what geographical area did the books sell?

Galarza: Sales have been recorded in twenty-seven states of the U.S., in México, Spain and the U.S.S.R.

Beard: Were all twelve of them intended for children?

Galarza: Yes. They vary in content. The later books were intended for the upper grades--fourth, fifth and sixth grade.

*Dr. Galarza's wife, Mae, participated in this interview session. The interviewer is Timothy Beard, teacher and graduate student in children's literature.

Beard: Which ones are those?

Galarza: Historia de una gota de miel, Aquí y allá en California, Historia verdadera de una botella de leche, Un poco de México. Those are are advanced ones. The others are elementary--Chogorróm, especially, which I think is the last I wrote.

So that's the story of the books in a nutshell.

Beard: When did this project really start?

Galarza: Oh, it really started back in 1943 or 1942 when I wrote Poemas Párvulos. It was a series of rhymes that I had written for my daughter in Spanish. And I had thought that it would stop with that.

Beard: Did you publish them at that time?

Galarza: That was the first one.

Mae Galarza: That was Rimas Tontas.

Galarza: But we didn't continue the project for the reasons I've indicated. The later books were published in this format because we felt we could keep the price down. You see the type is large [thumbing through Rimas Tontas], the illustrations are attractive and the text of the book was very carefully done.

So when we found out that the schools were not buying in quantity, I decided that it was too much of an investment to keep going with a whole series of eighteen.

Beard: You say you published Rimas Tontas back in 1942 --

Galarza: 1942 or 1943, something like that.

Beard: And was that the only one that you published at that time?

Galarza: At that time, yes. When we came to California we did this other series.

Beard: Where were you living in 1943?

Galarza: In New York.

Mae Galarza: Washington, dear.

Galarza: Was it Washington?

Beard: It was a long time ago.

Mae Galarza: None of us can remember that long ago.

Beard: I know I certainly can't. I'm not even that old! Then when did the idea of continuing that tradition that you had started back in 1943 first occur to you?

Galarza: When we came out to San Jose.

Beard: So right away you thought of doing a series for children?

Galarza: Well, we knew teachers who were constantly looking for materials. And it was through this stimulus that we started meeting those teachers and talking.

Mae Galarza: Well that, Ernest, was in the late sixties, isn't that right?

Beard: I see. So after Rimas Tontas there was a long period during which you didn't write children's rhymes. Did you think about it any more?

Galarza: No.

Mae Galarza: He didn't work in the schools at all [during that time].

Galarza: I met these people here. Their problem was really very serious. They didn't have materials. So these books were intended to supply that need.

Beard: How did the concerns of the teachers you mentioned relate to the larger picture of what was happening around the country with bilingual education legislation, etc.?

Galarza: We had known of teachers' interest in these materials for twenty years or so. We provided the Mini-libros after federal funding [of bilingual education] had begun.

Beard: Did you publish Rimas Tontas yourself in 1943?

Galarza: Yes, in a limited edition.

Beard: And how about these? [the rest of the Mini-libros] Did you publish them yourself?

Galarza: Well, they were printed here in town and published by me (under the imprint of Almaden Press), which was the imprint that I followed for all the stories.

- Beard: Were you funded in some way for this project or was this just a private enterprise?
- Galarza: Yes, just our investment. We were hoping to sell enough to keep it going. And it really did well I thought. All together those twelve books sold about 60,000 copies, which wasn't bad. And it would have continued selling in quantity if we had had the capital to put into production. But there was a lag of two or three years between the time a book appeared and the time the income started in in a big way. So it was too much of a risk to put in \$8,000 to \$10,000 a title and wait that long. And the more titles that appeared, the larger the investment. So we cancelled the last six.
- Beard: I know that the Rosenberg Foundation was interested in your projects. Did you receive some support from them related to the Mini-libros? Did you have any discussions with them regarding the project?
- Galarza: No. The foundation purchased sets of the books after they were produced. There was never a subsidy.
- Beard: When did you cancel the last six books?
- Galarza: About December 1976.
- Beard: And what is the status of the project now?
- Galarza: It has no status. I sold the books to this fellow up in San Francisco--Ramírez--and he promoted them. He's still selling them in quantity but not as many as he had hoped to.
- Beard: But they're still available through the distributor?
- Galarza: Yes. El Dorado Distributors.
- Beard: In San Francisco.
- Galarza: Yes, that's right. I don't know how many he sells a year, but my guess would be he's selling 2,000 or 3,000 copies.
- Beard: I know. I still see them in the bookstores.
- Galarza: Well, his problem is the same as mine. He has to publish at least 5,000 for an economical printing to reduce the price. And it takes him three or four years to get rid of these 5,000. That's not a big turnover. I don't think he's published any new books for the last year--any new editions.

Writing for Children in Spanish

- Beard: Do you know of any other Chicano or Mexican-American writers for children?
- Galarza: No.
- Beard: Why is that? Why are there no writers that have come up in the Mexican group here in the United States?
- Galarza: One reason is that the people who train in this country are not familiar with literature for which this is a background. That's one good reason. Secondly, I think they're trained too much in the stereotypes of children's literature. They don't believe in writing things for children to have fun reading. They believe in writing things that can be used to teach people techniques.
- Beard: Would you say that that tradition is didactic?
- Galarza: I guess so. But children are not interested in learning techniques. They want to have fun. And these books hold out a great hope to children. And if you read to them in the proper fashion, the teacher enjoys it and the children enjoy it. That's the way these books were written. And in my experience that's the way it was. Teachers who have found these books stand by them.
- Beard: Certainly we are without the tradition of Mother Goose in Spanish. There are many rimas, of course. But there is nothing quite like this. It sure fills a gap I think.
- Galarza: And I think that the fact that these books are still selling even in a small volume indicates that they had become sort of standby literature in this type of teaching.
- Beard: Standard? I believe so. I'm interested in the whole creative process, and I was just wondering if you could tell a little about what it was like for you to write these, to come up with these Mini-libros. What were your inspirations? How did you go about it?
- Galarza: Well, I just invented these rhythms, really, and I set them to words. And I found an illustrator who sympathized with the style. I was very fortunate to find this fellow, Rascón, and Art Schneider who illustrated Rimas Tontas. So the joining of the artistic interpretation and the technical interpretation was a very happy one. It worked out very well.

Galarza: But I can't tell you about the origin of these. I just simply sat down and -- First of all, I sketched the rhymes and then I wrote the words. Over time I improved on it. The main thing was that they were to be very short, very, very short, because if you get into details things enter into the text which shouldn't be there.

Mae Galarza: Well, Ernest of course had the progressive school training in New York, where there were many progressive schools. And he talked with people who were doing that kind of work. He heard about it at Teachers' College of Columbia, although he attended the history section. And that was really a kind of basic thing to start with. I remember in the early thirties there seemed to be an abundance of very fine books for children. And in our progressive school we had many, just brand new books, practically. And they were beautifully done, and done by very good people. This was all English, of course, all Anglo. But nevertheless, it gets a person who knows two languages thinking. Besides, Ernest realized what poetry meant to Spanish children and what it means to the Mexicans or any other Spanish-speaking people. There is so much written by adults in poetry. But of course, in Mexico you don't see as much of that as you might because they haven't thought of teaching the children. They haven't spent the money on teaching their children. And there's just no money in it at all. Of course, there's not any money in books period in Mexico.

But Ernest, of course, was always so interested in reading as a very, very young child. And his mother taught him to read really before he went to school.

Beard: There is in Mexico an oral tradition that is very rich--

Galarza: Not in this sort of thing.

Beard: Did you dip into your past, into your tradition, to come up with these poems?

Galarza: No. This kind of thing is not customary in Mexico. These had to be invented. You won't find a background for any of this in Mexican tradition. The Mexican school system is quite different. It's memorization; it's traditional stories that are told, and a great deal of oral repetition. So there was no inspiration there for these things.

Beard: How about the rhythms that you were talking about? You said that you thought first of a rhyme scheme and then expressed it in words afterwards.

- Galarza: No, these are mine. I mean they're mine in the sense that I don't have any models for these sketches. But of course in the Spanish language you have to adapt to the technical difficulties of rhyming. These are adaptations of that.
- Beard: So they are adaptations of a basic Spanish tradition.
- Galarza: Sure, basic Spanish.
- Beard: Do you remember rhymes from your childhood?
- Galarza: No. I didn't have any. It wasn't the type of schooling we got. In the very first grade we memorized texts and so forth. So in my experience in Mexico there's no stimulus, no background for this.
- Beard: Was there anything outside of school--a tradition among children--that you would have tapped into?
- Galarza: No.
- Beard: I have a question about a comment you made in the beginning of Más Poemas Párvulos. You were talking about Requetemorrocotudo and you say that he is "autentico Mexicano."
- Galarza: Well, I believe he is because of the name. That's a very Mexican name.
- Beard: What is Mexican about it?
- Galarza: Well, the structure of the name, especially the first part, is very Mexican. And the second part is very typical of lower-class Spanish. It's an exaggeration type of thing.
- Beard: You said the "Requete-" is very Mexican. What feeling does it have?
- Galarza: Repetition, emphasis.
- Beard: And what would be an example of the use of "requete-" in another situation?
- Galarza: Well, you attach that to any adjective and you get a universal use of the prefix.
- Beard: It kind of heightens--
- Galarza: Yes, it does. Very emphatic. Very, very emphatic. A way of saying, "It's just this way."

- Beard: And the "cotudo-," you said in referring to the end of the word, was typical working class Spanish?
- Galarza: Well, it means "typical," it means "authentic," it is very emphatic. Más Poemas Párvulos is about as close to a Mexican thing as any of the books came. And the illustrations are beautiful.
- Beard: I think they are extraordinary. They compliment the text wonderfully.
- Mae Galarza: Yes, don't they? They're so apt. You know I feel that Ernest's feel for poetry, all at least that wasn't instinctive, came from his association with Mexicans. You see, for his senior year in college he was back in Mexico doing research and had some associations with literary people for the year. And he associated with some very fine students, not many, I guess, but some at least. And then, too, he became quite familiar with the literature at that time, and he realized, probably, how much was in poetry. And as an adult, after he left home, he might say, in all his education he kept up the Spanish reading, although, goodness knows, he couldn't get many Spanish books around where he was in Sacramento. But probably by the time he got down to Los Angeles at Occidental, there were more. I don't know about that part. [She turns to Ernesto.]
- But as you become familiar with the Spanish language in literature, in script, don't you think that you got a feeling for the amount of literature in poetry form? Every Mexican was supposed to write poems!
- Galarza: Part of Mexican literary tradition, of course, greatly emphasizes poetry, but not this type of poetry, not children's poetry.
- Mae Galarza: Oh no, not this type.
- Beard: When did you write poetry for the first time? In 1942 or 1943?
- Galarza: About 1943 or so. And I did it for teaching purposes.
- Beard: Well, you said that first of all you did it for your daughter.
- Galarza: Well, for teaching her Spanish.
- Mae Galarza: Ernest, you wrote English poetry before that time, but not these books, not Spanish poetry.
- Glarza: But this was the first time I took it really seriously, seriously enough to think that they might get published.

- Beard: But you had written poetry before that?
- Galarza: Not for publishing.
- Beard: No, not for publishing, but because you felt the urge--?
- Galarza: It was very different from this stuff.
- Mae Galarza: Oh, yes. They were adult, very adult.
- Beard: But nonetheless, your interest in poetry predates the Rimas Tontas.
- Galarza: Yes. Rimas Tontas is [really] a part of the Mini-libros series. The twenty year gap between the books was accidental.
- Beard: Would you say that there are any influences?
- Galarza: No. I just did it because I liked it. It's the best reason in the world.
- Beard: Sure it is. And it comes across that way, as very spontaneous.
- Mae Galarza: Well, maybe that's the reason why there aren't any Mexican Americans, as far as we know, writing for children. Not a one that I know anything of.
- Galarza: No, they're not exposed to that.
- Beard: Are you suggestion that it's because they are not exposed to the children's traditions of other languages?
- Galarza: They are exposed to the academic tradition in this country, but it's just so stale and so arbitrary, so inappropriate really. It doesn't stimulate them to write or to express themselves. And after one or two generations go by, then those traditions are lost. Originally I had hoped my books would help young Mexican children to perfect their home language.
- That's why I'm surprised to find out that the most interested, enthusiastic readers are Anglos.
- Beard: That's the feedback you've gotten?
- Galarza: Yes.

The Mini-libros and Bilingual Education

Mae Galarza: Well, I was very interested in them because of the real resource material that's there. I was constantly trying to get that in the public schools. I just didn't have the resource material. It was very difficult for me. There wasn't ever a library in the school where I taught, no school whatsoever. You'd have to go miles to a library, and you could get one book. They weren't books for children at all. I mean, I couldn't get a dozen or two dozen. It was just all missing.

And the one best book always is Barrio Boy. What could be done with the one book in the way of resource material for teaching! You can dramatize it, you can talk, you can have writing on it. You can relate the activities to different age groups, to something in their own right, right now or in the past, or with some other writer you know. Just so many things! It can be used in more ways than any other book I ever had to deal with.

Beard: Mae, what exactly was your position then?

Mae Galarza: I was a participant in the Studio Laboratory program and was very much interested in the methodology of bilingual education.

Beard: When you found out that you had a resource at your disposal here [Ernesto] for the production of materials, Mae, did you encourage him to write? Did you realize that this project [the Mini-libros] was going to come out of it?

Galarza: Oh yes! I wouldn't have written it if it hadn't been for Mae. She kept insisting. And once we got started and we could see our way through to financing it, this was more encouraging to continue the series, to get these into print. We knew a printer here who was very accommodating. And with his help and Vicente Rascón, the artist, we got started.

Beard: Mae, you mentioned Barrio Boy. When was that first published?

Galarza: 1970? [Mae leaves the room to find the book.]

Beard: Did Barrio Boy grow out of the Mini-libros or did the Mini-libros grow out of Barrio Boy?

Galarza: No. There was no relationship whatsoever. It was an entirely different process. Got a date, Mae? [long pause]

Mae Galarza: [back in the room now] 1971.

- Beard: Of course Rimas Tontas came out many years before. But the rest of the Mini-libros came after Barrio Boy. Is that what you are saying?
- Galarza: Yes. These are from the early seventies on.
- Beard: Is there some relationship between Barrio Boy and the Mini-libros?
- Galarza: No.
- Beard: Well, Barrio Boy is about your youth, your childhood. And the Mini-libros are books for children--
- Galarza: But they are not for me.
- Beard: They are not for you. I realize that now.
- Galarza: They were for people who had a responsibility to teach--or to rear--little children in the special situations here in this country.
- Beard: Could they have had any connection with what you said earlier about being deprived of this tradition in your childhood?
- Galarza: I don't think so. I did them for people who were in teaching and who were assigned to teach a bilingual class. That's when I started looking for materials and couldn't find any. That's what I wrote for. I talked to many teachers. They came and asked me, cried over it. So I started doing it.
- My hope was that if we were able to establish this as a business, that we could publish a supplement to each book in Spanish--very simple Spanish--for the teacher, picking up clues from each poem, explaining the background of certain phrases and words and ideas, and in that way give them a general background with the impetus of the Mini-libros' life. Then the third phase of that was to expand that into a handbook for teachers, in Spanish also, giving in greater detail the cultural background of these poems. And they're very rich in that background.
- So this was a lifetime project. But it all depended upon these Mini-libros being a financial success.
- Mae Galarza: [referring to a slender black binder] Now this is the type of thing he did in Reading.

- Beard: Let me see. It says, "Three Preliminary Drafts of Elementary Educational Materials in Spanish developed by the Bilingual-Bicultural Studio Laboratory, San Jose Unified School District, July 1973." And this folio, then, represents an attempt to teach Spanish, what would you say, through creative arts?
- Galarza: Reading that is stimulating.
- Mae Galarza: This is a supplement to the Mini-libros presuming that the teachers wanted to go a little bit further, and it is not in poetry but in narrative.

A Personal Look at the Mini-libros

- Beard: What I would like to ask you to do now in this part of the interview is to give a brief personal survey of some of the cultural background of these poems, if you don't mind. I'd like to know what your favorites are.
- Galarza: Oh, let's take a look at some of them.
- Beard: I'd love it. And I think that if this were available to children, your feeling behind the poetry, your deep sense of the culture would come through to them.
- Galarza: Well, Chogorróm [referring to the book, Chogorróm] is a character who used to live with us--a bullfrog who used to make his home in the bushes. So we named this book of poems Chogorróm, and this title comes from that name.

These are some examples of themes that could be amplified in very easy stages so that teachers could be able to explain to the children once they had learned these poems what these things meant.

This one is about the little trees which grow on the tops of houses. Those [pointing to the illustration] are television trees, television antennas.

- Beard: Could you read that one in Spanish? I'd love to hear it.
- Galarza: En los techos
de las casas
de mi alrededor
derechos, derechitos
crecen los arbolitos
de televisión.

Galarza: And here's the story of the gallina Clo-Clo who is looking around for a place to lay an egg. And the poem tells her to lay it on the hand. That's something that children would like, I think-- the idea of putting your hand out and having an egg in it.

Beard: It's a great fantasy, isn't it? Could you read it?

Galarza: Gallina Clo-Clo
 ¿que tienes de nuevo?
 Que ando con ganas
 de poner un huevo.
 Gallina Clo-Clo
 ¿por qué no lo pones?
 La mera verdad es
 no encuentro donde.
 Gallina Clo-Clo
 vamos a ver,
 aquí en mi mano
 lo puedes poner.

These poems were written with a structure. There is a climax within each verse. And that's what makes them interesting to children, I think.

Beard: You say they are simple.

Galarza: Very simple.

Beard: And dramatic.

Galarza: And if I had followed through with the project, the format was to have repeated the poem in small type, and then below it an explanation in simple Spanish for the teacher. Well, she could follow as she explained to the class what the background of the poem is. And, incidentally, explain to the children something about Mexican customs.

Beard: Perhaps as a way to go through an example of that, could I ask you to look at this poem which is always one of the favorites of the children I have worked with.

Galarza: Chinita, Chinita
 ¿te quieres casar?
 Cástate conmigo
 y vas a gozar.
 Ni platos ni ollas
 tendrás que lavar
 y todas las noches
 te llevo a bailar.

- Galarza: I can see why they would be interested! [laughing]
- Beard: They love that poem, and I love it, too. But I was wondering if perhaps you could give an example of what you might have done with your notes on the cultural background of a poem like this.
- Galarza: I haven't given this thought for years, but I guess I would point out that the role of girls in the traditional Mexican family was to wash dishes and clean up in the kitchen after meals. But this poem says, "You can do more than that. You can go dancing with me on Saturday night." And the rhythm of this is a dance rhythm.
- Mae Galarza: It's so mature of the kids to like that. First graders or fourth graders are not going to a dance afterwards.
- Galarza: Well, it gives them an idea.
- Beard: Why do you think it does appeal to children?
- Mae Galarza: Well, of course, my first reason why any one of the poems appeals to children is because it's such good fun. And it's a fun wholesomeness. My god, where can you get anything wholesome in this world today! The poem is rich with wholesomeness. It's very relative, of course. These kids, I suppose, hear a certain amount at home along that line, "Well, now, if you do such and such, you can go somewhere." "If mother gets everything done, you can go to the show tonight, or you can go dancing." I don't know whether there's very much of dancing--maybe the Mexicans do.
- Galarza: Among the young people dancing is a neighborhood affair.
- Mae Galarza: It's done at home. That's right. You don't go to a dance--it's done at home.
- Beard: How about the word 'Chinita'? Where does that word come from?
- Galarza: That's another Spanish word. It comes from the China Poblana. Children are called Chinita, girls.
- Mae Galarza: Let's see, if they have curly hair--?
- Galarza: That's right. It means curly-haired, curly-haired little girl. And so you could develop, I'd say, a couple hundred words in very simple Spanish based upon this concept. And that would be step two in the teaching of a child. You'd explain 'Chinita,' you'd explain 'platos' and 'ollas' and so forth. Some of these, of course, lend themselves better to explanations of background. Some are very rich in background.

- Beard: Which do you consider those to be? Could you, perhaps, pick out a few that you are especially fond of as being rich in background?
- Galarza: No, I don't think I could because they are so--
- Mae Galarza: That background thing is, I think, to a great extent instinctive. It's passed from generation to generation. It may be how the genes patterned a little more for some than others, and---
- Galarza: The whole idea, though, was to give the kids some new information, and the teacher some background for this to explain "La Chinita," to explain that this poem talks about country children who go to the city.
- Beard: Which poem is this one?
- Galarza: This one here.
- Beard: This is from Chogorróm?
- Galarza: Yes.
- Beard: It is "Le dijo un huevo ranchero -- "
- Galarza: " -- a otro de la ciudad." It's a conversation between two eggs. I was trying to use these as an incentive for the teacher to become a little bit more familiar with the cultural background of these terms. It would very easily do that because it would take the form of short stories for the teacher which she could bring back to the child.
- Beard: What are the reasons for wanting the teacher to teach about the Mexican culture to children here in the United States?
- Galarza: Well, if you are to establish any kind of common ground with the child, it enables you to reach into the child and bring the child to you more. The child realizes that you like his language, that you know something about what these words mean and tell interesting stories about the meaning--where the word comes from, how it's pronounced, what it is. I think it builds on the poem itself. And as an incentive to learning it is invaluable.
- Beard: It builds some relationship between the teacher and the child. How about between the child and his own culture?
- Galarza: Well, these were teaching instruments. I had the teacher in mind more than the culture. But I was utilizing the strands of cultural richness in these poems to enable her to get the child deeper and deeper into the poem. The poem by itself is just so much rhythm.

Galarza: It is music and musical words, the rhythm. There is a sound quality to them. But beyond that there is a learning content that is very valuable. Properly handled and properly introduced over a period of five or six years, you'll get deeply into the culture. That was my intuition in planning the books on that scale. The third step was a handbook explaining to teachers in more detail what some of this background is. But this is a process which is not understood by American educators.

Beard: I have another example here of a poem that is a favorite among the children. Would you mind reading it?

Galarza: Juan, Juan
el gran truhán
al panadero
le robó un pan.
Se lo comió
con mucha prisa
y el panadero
le dio una paliza.

I can understand why they like that.

Beard: Why?

Galarza: Feeling good and then getting a beating. I don't know where I got the image first except that in our city, Mazatlan, this is the way bread was delivered to us. [pointing to the picture of a man carrying a large basket full of rolls] A man came along with a big basket on his head and he would put it down at your front door so you could take your pick. And you had your own little basket into which you put the pieces which you selected.

Beard: At this point, what else would your cultural notes be saying about this poem?

Galarza: I would explain that the reason why the man was bringing bread in this big basket--that is, he was really delivering it--was that he was bringing this assortment so that the housewife could make her choice instead of going to the bakery. She would make her choice from the basket as she did all the time. She would take five or six pieces and then pay for them and take them in the house. All this is interesting folklore which you don't get from the poem, but which grows out of the poem very logically and very sensibly if you know the background. And of course the bit about the boy stealing the bread from his basket is just fun play.

The Mini-libros--A Discovery of Spanish Language and Culture

Galarza: I think it would have been an introduction to Mexican culture that would have been really invaluable. It would have taken a different slant on curriculum, which American schools are not used to.

Beard: Could you explain this slant a little bit more?

Galarza: Well, in the American schools experts write curriculum for the first grade and then they write the materials for that. And it's prescribed. But really the child has to digest a certain portion of the curriculum and it becomes very boring. There's nothing spontaneous about it, nothing relating to the interests of the child.

The Mini-libros are a total reversal of that. The assumption is that each of these poems is written in such a way so that it will interest children. You take a risk. You have to know children and you have to know the language. And that is the risk that underlies the Mini-libros. It turned out to be a safe risk.

Beard: So you turned things on their head. You started out with the inspiration first and came up with the curriculum afterwards.

Galarza: We started out with the teachers. I wanted to make sure as I wrote these poems that teachers who knew enough Spanish to be in charge of teaching it would be able to read it. And I had to appeal to their child instincts, so to speak. I had to be sure that the poem was something that would arouse in them pleasure. And these poems do. They're pleasant to read if you're an adult. In a way it's a discovery of the Spanish language for you as a teacher. That to me was absolutely essential. If you didn't do that through this medium, you couldn't get to the child. But if you did it, the teacher would find ways--she would read to the children; she would buy the books; she would have them around; she would teach the children to read in this way.

Beard: Did you discover anything about your childhood in writing these books?

Galarza: No, not really, because we never read this kind of thing. I learned my reading from the books that my mother had in the kitchen--bookbooks and novels--things that she bought for her own pleasure. They were not for children.

Beard: Certainly images from your childhood come out in these poems.

Galarza: Yes, images of my experience in the Mexican setting--out of the environment in which I grew up. For instance--

Mae Galarza: Not from books, but what he actually saw, observation.

Galarza: The impression I had was to understand what the situation was in the American classroom--we were here and also we lived here; my friends and also Mae's friends were teachers; we had this problem; we used to talk about bilingual education--that had to be the beginning point. You had to have these things for teachers--materials that they would find interesting, attractive, stimulating and useful.

Beard: You were talking about getting deeper into the culture through these books. I was wondering how this relates to the concern of the loss of culture here in the United States. We talked about the theme of acculturation before --

Galarza: Well, you wouldn't expect the children to be very worried about losing their culture.

Beard: No. But for you as a writer, was that one of your concerns?

Galarza: Oh, yes, sure. I think that children who were born in Mexico or who come from Mexico profited from knowing these things about how their folks grew up, what their customs were, what these expressions were. But that's a secondary benefit. There is no way to appeal to a first grader by telling him that you are trying to save his culture. He could care less. He is interested in seeing himself by the hour in relation to these adults who surround him. So we had to take an adult point of view, a pedagogical point of view. If these Mini-libros were to be a success, they had to start from that point. In a way it's not a surprise that they haven't made faster progress than they have because it takes an adult teacher, an adult person, to understand the values that are behind these books and to respond to the teaching formulas which are implied.

Beard: And yet at the same time they had to be able to consider the child as a child rather than as an adult.

Galarza: It's a complicated process, far too complicated for a school principal. They don't think in these terms.

Beard: What terms do they think in?

Galarza: You know better than I do. [laughter]

There is another thing, too, which is [unintelligible]
In writing Poemas Párvulos and Chogorróm, especially, and a few others, I had in mind simulating the rhythms of American poems

Galarza: for children in the sense that the phrasing of the Spanish text would have the same quality, like rhythmic poems, as they do in English. And I've tried to do that especially in Poemas Párvulos.

Beard: Why did you want to do that?

Galarza: It seemed to me easier for a teacher who was interested in teaching these poems to draw a parallel with English equivalents, and then to read the English poems to a child, which presumably he would find easier to read. This would make the transfer much more interesting for the child. And some teachers tried that. For instance, here is a poem about Old Mother Hubbard. "Old Mother Hubbard/ Went to the cupboard" and so on.

En la alacena
de doña Elena
ni pan ni queso
ni tortas hay.
No hay, no hay,
pues, ¡que caray!
ten calentito
un pedacito
de pumpkin pie.

That's the rhythm in English of Mother Goose. But that doesn't mean that I translated Mother Hubbard. It seems to me that the idea of Mother Hubbard is here in Spanish. And the teachers I've talked to who have used them see that teaching from the Mini-libros and the supplements they could gradually teach a very important lesson in cultural sympathy--namely that the poetic ideal can be easily put in many languages. And this is the proof of it. Poemas Párvulos is rhythmically English and genuinely bilingual.

"Simonelo, nino lelo" is a poem about Simple Simon. If you read this in Spanish, the rhythm reminds you of "Simple Simon." And then when you read "Simple Simon" in English, the next step would be to tempt you to read it in both languages. It is too subtle an approach to appeal, as I say, to our school principals.

Beard: Could the Mini-libros have been written by anybody else but a Chicano?

Galarza: They could not have been written by anybody but me! [laughter]

Mae Galarza: Now you have it! [more laughter]

Galarza: There it is in a nutshell.

A Bicultural Heritage

- Beard: You have wedded English and Spanish; you have wedded the two cultures in your children's poems. It strikes me very forcefully that that is the work of somebody who has his foot in both cultures, someone whose life is wedded to both cultures.
- Galarza: I was reared in both languages. Up until the time I was nine, the home language was Spanish, spoken by adults who had a hard time with English, who were always turning to me to translate letters, to go shopping, to go to the store with them and to help them into the English world. That was nine years of training I had, you see--transposing from one language to another.
- Beard: Did that forge a link, then, between the languages and their rhythms?
- Galarza: No. It simply gave me the opportunity of experiencing Spanish very intimately (until I was old enough not to forget it). My mother used to read to me in Spanish. She would pick out a page or two of her novels. She read beautifully, very expressively.
- Mae Galarza: Ernest, I never heard you say that before.
- Galarza: She would sit and make me stop whatever I was doing, and say now is the time for me to listen to her read. And once in a while I would read back to her. This went on for nine years from the earliest time I can remember.
- Beard: Is that your earliest memory of lyrical language?
- Galarza: It is the earliest memory that I have, yes. She didn't read poetry to me. She read from her novel that she happened to be reading at the time. Sometimes she would read from the newspapers, though not very often. She wasn't very fond of newspapers. Whenever she found something particularly interesting, she would give it to me. She would mark the paragraph and I would read it to her.
- So I can't say that I was systematically taught to appreciate bicultural education. It was just normal for me. That's the way it was at home, like Cronkite, "That's the way it was." [laughter]
- Beard: Requetemorrocotudo "shouts out" in the front of this book, "¡Yo soy de Jalcoacán!" And I recall that in that Santa Barbara Conference on Mexican-Americans you talked about the money bag that Mexican men wear around their waist. You said that the men in Jalco carried these with them day and night. And you said, "This was all the money they possessed"--

- Galarza: Yes. If you had any money at all in cash, you put it in one of these víboras and you tied it around your waist and you took that to work with you.
- Beard: I'm wondering if you had a cultural bag that you have carried around with you since you came from Jalco--
- Galarza: No! [laughing]
- Beard: --and that when Requetemorrocotudo shouts out, "¡Yo soy de Jalcocotán!", that's really Ernesto Galarza dipping into his cultural bag.
- Galarza: No, it's a true statement--
- Beard: I know it is.
- Galarza: --because I was born there! But it seemed to me that that was a good way of making Requetemorrocotudo feel at home. The habits and customs of the people of Jalco were really riveted in my mind because the village was my playground. And I saw these things. I saw these things. I saw men tying their víboras around them, taking them to work. And at night they would take them off and hang them by the bedpost. This was security. This was the closest they ever came to a bank. And by the time they got around to going to Tepic for shopping, all their money that they had earned was in those víboras. Once in a great while you would find one hanging in a cottage. But it was certain to be a place where either a grandparent or other relative was always present and therefore could keep an eye on it. But it wasn't just left there by itself. That was kind of a classic name for it, the víbora. Somebody would bite you if you touched it! So you mustn't touch this.
- Beard: What about the culture that Mexicans bring with them to the United States--their whole identity as Mexicans? How do they keep that? And how did you, when you left the barrio and went to Washington, D.C., New York, Indiana--the many places you've been--what can you say from your own experience about how you maintained your identity, your Mexican identity? What do you have to say to people who are growing up now in the barrio?
- Galarza: Well, in my case it was a little odd. I was never aware of making an effort to keep my identity because I never had any problem with it. These children, surrounded as they are by this atmosphere, do have problems with their identity. People make fun of them. They have trouble learning English--all kinds of difficulties. There's a syndrome of adaptation that they have to get used to, which I did not.

Beard: Did you feel discrimination?

Galarza: As I grew older, yes. I saw it around mostly because of my friends' complaints of it. In my family, for instance, my mother was in the habit of inviting Mexicans who had just arrived here from Mexico and who had a lot of difficulties finding a job or a place to live--she would invite them to supper, usually on Sunday. They would sit around and talk about their problems. And I heard a lot of this from them--the difficulties they had in finding a job and a place to live and finding transportation. The difficulties of adaptation were very, very, very much to the fore. And I got this at first hand from people who were suffering unfriendliness.

But I can't say that I had to make an effort myself to maintain my culture. I had no problems. It was a Mexican family that I lived in. And we made no bones about it, never talked about it. It was just natural, which is the way it should be.

But as one grows older, you run into these adult problems of education and citizenship. And you hear the people talk about them. Then if, professionally, you become interested in them, your whole focus changes. You begin to be aware of this problem, but not as a personal tragedy. I can't say that I ever had that problem.

Beard: Were you always a part of a movement?

Galarza: No, I busied myself making other efforts here and there. No, that was a much later phase. As an adult, the problems became serious enough to warrant joining hands with other people into organized efforts to change things. But it wasn't the personal evolution that a child would be going through.

I did have young friends who had that problem. Right across the street from us, for instance, lived a little Japanese boy. He was very stout, very short, a very lively, very friendly little guy. He was my age and he had a very severe problem. His parents couldn't speak English and they were always nagging him about studying English. They had a lot of difficulty at home and I used to talk with him about his difficulties. I learned from him that prejudice and discrimination were very strong in this society. Sometimes he would become furious, almost out of sorts, because he didn't know why people were mean to him. He lived just across the street from us on our street.

Galarza: So I got these impressions vicariously, not because they were visited on me, but because my friends and my relatives and my acquaintances were always talking about them. I became sensitive to what was going on in American society through them. But I was surrounded by friends. The next door neighbor had a youngster just a little younger than I was--little Alfred. She danced in a bar, a dance hall, just two blocks away from us. This little kid was left alone at night, so I babysat for her. I got to know him quite well.

The corner grocer was a Greek who could hardly speak English. He was running a grocery store. I became a very close friend of his. We used to exchange lessons in English. I would teach him some word I knew and he would teach me a word he knew.

So that atmosphere I grew up in in that block of Sacramento was a friendly, helpful atmosphere. Even though there was a lot of conflict in it, and a lot of turmoil, it wasn't personally directed at me.

Beard: What did you call yourself when you went to school?

Galarza: Hm. That's a good question. At home my first name was "Ernesto." That's all it was.

Beard: And what was it at school?

Galarza: It was "Ernest."

Beard: Didn't you sign your first book as "Ernest"?

Galarza: Oh, for years I exercised the privilege of signing it both ways.

Beard: Did you? Because what's curious to me is that it's certainly "Ernesto" in the Mini-libros. Your name is "Ernesto."

Galarza: Yes. Well, sometimes I would sign my English name.

Beard: Did you go through a transition at all in terms of your feelings toward your identity?

Galarza: No, except that sometimes I was admonished by people who would say, "Well, that's not an English name. What's your name in English?" So I'd say "Ernest." Or if I was talking to Mexicans, they would say, "What a queer way to call yourself. Your real name is "Ernesto." Lots of times I was ambivalent about it. I was always anxious to please the customer.

Beard: Are you still?

Galarza: Sure! Except that some people call me other things! [laughter]

Beard: Now I think that you are fairly well known as "Ernesto Galarza."

Galarza: Yes, I guess so.

Beard: That difficulty has been settled, then.

Galarza: Yes. That's my pen name now anyway.

And so the evolution of these books stopped short. I'm sorry about that because I could have continued a pedagogical experiment which was very interesting. But it would have required support from the schools.

Beard: Well, I think that you have certainly left something for people to work with. What you have done will last for a long time. I wouldn't be the slightest bit apologetic about not finishing. Although there is nobody who regrets that more than myself, as a teacher.

Galarza: No, I'm not regretful because I think that looking at the circumstances at the time and the way things were, Chogorróm was as far as we could go. And it was a large decision to stop there and not to continue throwing these ideas at a stone wall. I think the stone wall will probably decay in another thousand years and the resistance to these ideas will diminish. But for the times that we lived in--live in--this was the best that we could do.

Beard: There is something about the written word which is different from just an idea that a person has. You have left something.

Galarza: Sure. It's in writing and it's there for you to use if you want to. It's accessible. It's in print. It's commercially successful enough to warrant continuous reprints so that it will be a lively contribution. And really, considering all the circumstances under which we worked, that is the most we can hope for.

Transcriber: Tim Beard
 Final Typist: Kay Sugimoto

TAPE GUIDE -- Ernesto Galarza

ca. 1959-60 (tape indicates no date)	
[Deposited in The Bancroft Library, Donated Oral Histories Collection]	
tape 1, side A	1
tape 1, side B	7
May 7, 1974	
[Deposited in The Bancroft Library, Donated Oral Histories Collection]	
tape 2 [Not transcribed; poor recording]	13
April 20, 1977	
tape 3, side A	27
tape 3, side B	35
tape 4, side A [Side B not recorded]	43
October 21, 1977	
tape 5, side A	49
tape 5, side B	61
December 7, 1978	
tape 6, side A	75
tape 6, side B	90
[Tape ran out; reconstruction from notes]	103
tape 7, side A [Side B not recorded]	105
March 10, 1981	
tape 8	113

Ernesto Galarza
1031 Franquette Ave.
San Jose, Calif. 95125

October 8, 1977

Dr. Charles Knight
Superintendent
San Jose Unified School District
1605 Park Ave.
San Jose, Calif.

Dear Dr. Knight:

Calling your attention to the following facts:

Shortly before September 21 of this year, The Director of the San Jose Area Bilingual Consortium obtained through clandestine means a copy of a letter signed by me and dated September 12. (Copy attached).

My letter is a routine authorization for a draft on a community assistance fund created through my efforts several years ago. Its purpose is to provide the residents of Alviso with technical, legal and other supportive services to aid the Alvisans in their resistance to the abolition of their town. For more than a decade and working as an unpaid volunteer I have been responsible for this resistance, which has been successful thus far. I am the sole trustee of the fund. I have never administered these monies. The Mexican American Community Services Agency is the fiscal and accounting agent.

In keeping with my trust, I have retained the law firm of Estremera, Gallardo and Hawes to represent the Comité de Mejoras de Alviso, a responsible community organization.

As you well know, I am principally responsible for the creation of the Community Organization to Monitor Education, which is mainly concerned with evaluating the operation of the San Jose Area Bilingual Consortium, of which you are the titular head.

As soon as Ms. Martinez had possession of the purloined letter of September 12, she caused a meeting of residents of Alviso to be called at the George Mayne Elementary School. At that meeting Ms. Martinez delivered a copy or copies of the letter together with a copy of the Administrative Complaint against the Consortium that I and a number of other citizens have submitted to the Department of Health, Education and Welfare.

The distinct impression created in the minds of the Alvisans who attended that meeting was that I have wrongfully authorized a draft on the Community assistance fund to retain the firm of Estremera, Gallardo and Hawes to forward the complaint against the Consortium. This impression has spread in Alviso, generating a demand for an investigation of presumed malfeasance in my trust. Ms. Martinez kindly provided the Alvisans with a garbled translation into Spanish of my letter of September 12 which, in my judgement added to the intended confusion. (Copy attached).

There is a strong presumption, from the facts known to me, that the Director was acting in her official capacity and therefore as an agent of the San Jose Unified School District and the Consortium.

I have already talked with the Alviso residents concerned, and have fully endorsed the suggestion of an investigation. As it proceeds you may want to inform me of any other facts that would clarify this matter. At your very earliest convenience, please. Sincerely,

Ernesto Galarza *Ernesto Galarza*

c.c. Hon. Phillip Hammer
Mr. Jorge Pineiro
Hon. Don Edwards
Hon. Norman Mineta
Hon. Al Garza
Hon. Joe Colla

Member of the Community Organization
to Monitor Education
Estremera, Gallardo and Hawes
Comité de Mejoras de Alviso

September 12, 1977

Mr. Jose Villa

M.AcS.A.

San Jose, Calif.

Please draw a check for one thousand-five hundred dollars (\$ 1,500.00) in favor of the law firm of Estremara, Gallardo and Hawes, 235 East Santa Clara, San Jose, Calif. This amount is to be charged to the Alviso community assistance fund in payment of legal assistance to the Comité de Mejoras de Alviso for research and preparation of pleadings such as may be required to bring matters of interest to that community to adjudication, if necessary.

Thank you



Ernesto Galarza

17 septiembre 1977

Sr. José Villa

M.A C.S.A

San Jose, Ca

Sírvase entender un cheque de mil quinientos dólares (\$ 1,500) en el favor de la oficina de abogados del nombre Estremara, Gallardo y Hawes, Calle Santa Clara Este N° 235, San José, Calif. Se le cobrará esta cantidad al fondo para asistencia de la comunidad de Alviso como pago por auxilio legal al Comité de Mejoras de Alviso para la investigación y preparación de alegatos tales como sean necesarios para dar el fallo a los asuntos de interés de la mencionada comunidad, si sea necesario.

Gracias,

Ernesto Galarza

Ernesto Galarza
1031 Franquette Ave.
San Jose, CA. 95125

October 8, 1977

Ms. Olivia Martinez, Director
San Jose Area Bilingual Education
1605 Park Ave.
San Jose, Calif.

Dear Ms. Martinez:


There is attached to this a copy of a one page typescript which purports to be a translation into Spanish of a letter written by me on September 12, 1977, addressed to Mr. José Villa, Director of the Mexican American Community Services Agency. I am sure you are familiar with the circumstantial context of the matters referred to.

Please send me an acceptable translation of the letter referred and a distribution plan for the correction to be sent to all persons who have received the garbled version. In order to assist you please find herewith a draft of a possible text consonant with the gramatical and social usage of the persons to whom it is addressed.

I am humiliated to have such a translation placed in circulation by you and attributed to me. It reflects seriously on my ability to write in the Spanish language, a matter of professional concern to me. I refer you to my twelve books for children which comprise the COLECCION MINI LIBROS.

I await your reply at an early date.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in dark ink, reading "Ernesto Galarza". The signature is written in a cursive, flowing style with a large initial 'E'.

Ernesto Galarza

(draft)

Sr. José Villa

Sírvase girar un cheque por la suma de mil quinientos dólares (\$1,500.00) a nombre del bufete Estremera, Gallarso y Hawes, cuya dirección es la siguiente: Calle de Santa Clara Numero 235, San José, Calif., con cargo al fondo de defensa municipal pro-Alviso que Usted acertadamente administra. Dicha suma queda autorizada a favor del Comité de Mejoras de Alviso para la investigación y preparación de los autos que fuesen procedentes, necesarios y de interés para la mencionada comunidad.

Gracias

Chronological List of Publications
of
Ernesto Galarza

- 1977 Farm Workers and Agri-Business in California 1947-1960.
Notre Dame, Indiana: Notre Dame University Press, 405 pp.

By the middle of the 20th Century a new establishment had matured within the American Commonwealth. Its economic base was centered in California and its name was Agri-business. As it matured, the system coordinated land, water and labor supply with technology, mechanization and mass marketing. Overseeing it was an intricate network of associations of producers, shippers, marketers, financiers, government agencies, and speculators. In the face of this formidable combination, farm laborers carried on a series of delaying actions which resulted in the termination of contracting in 1964. These events are narrated by a participant-observer, practiced and skilled.

- The Tragedy at Chualar. Santa Barbara: McNally and Loftin, 106 pp.

Mexican contract laborers known as braceros were hired by the thousands in California in 1960's. On September 18, 1963, 32 of these braceros perished in a bus that collided with a train near Chualar, California. This report to the Labor Committee of the House of Representatives describes in detail the circumstances of the tragedy and the labor system which produced it. This report was conducive to litigation and administrative claims that resulted in settlements of hundreds of thousands of dollars in favor of the families of the deceased.

- 1973 Bilingual Education in the San Jose Unified School District.
Department of Urban Education and San Jose Model Cities,
56 pp.

A private grant from the John Hay Whitney Foundation enabled the San Jose Unified School District to begin experimenting with bi-lingual education. One result was the organization of the Studio Laboratory which recruited and trained teachers in service from various Santa Clara County school districts.

- 1973 Alviso - The Crisis of a Barrio. Mexican American Community Services Agency, 46 pp.

Traditionally, Mexican emigrants have found their first jobs and homes in agricultural areas. The labor pools thus formed continuously overflowed into industrial opportunities in the urban centers. The emigrants settled in the fringes of metropolitan employment, marginal locations like Alviso, continuously threatened by high-rise urbanization. (This is xeroxed for college courses in the Southwest).

- 1971 Barrio Boy. Notre Dame, Indiana: Notre Dame Press, 275 pp.

- 1977 Traspasando Fronteras. Serie Frontera, Secretaria de Educacion Publica. (Spanish translation of Barrio Boy.)

Barrio Boy is the story of a Mexican family, uprooted from its home in a mountain village, in continuous flight from the revolutionary wind that swept Mexico after 1910. The episodes of the journey were typical of those of hundreds of thousands of refugees. They settled permanently in California and other border states. The barrio of this tale is that of Sacramento, California.

Excerpts from Barrio Boy in various school books, junior high through college:

- 1979 Types of Literature. Ginn and Company.
 1975 Chicano Voices. Houghton Mifflin Co.
 1974 Literary Heritage Series. Macmillan Publishing Co.
 1973 Outlooks Through Literature. Scott, Foresman and Co.
 1972 Basic Reading Code Book. McCracken & Walcutt, Lippencott & Co.

- 1970 Mexican-Americans in the Southwest. (with Herman Gallegos and Julian Samora) Santa Barbara: McNally and Loftin, 94 pp.

Over the past century, Mexican migration across the border became the prime source of what has come to be called the Mexican-American minority in the United States. It now numbers over six million persons, most of whom are massed in the low-income sectors of the Southwestern United States. Their particular economic, social and cultural placement in American society is sketched in this book.

1973-1968 Coleccion Mini-Libros. (Lecturas para Maestros,
Fantasy and Reality)

English:	145 <u>Zoo Fun</u>	
Spanish and English:	<u>Poems Pe-que-Pe que- Pe-que-ñitos</u> <u>Very, Very Short Nature Poems</u>	
Spanish Poems: (fantasy)	<u>Zoo Risa</u> <u>Poemas Párvulos</u> <u>Chogorróm</u>	<u>Rimas Tontas</u> <u>Más Poemas Párvulos</u>
Spanish Prose: (reality)	<u>Un Poco de México,</u> <u>Aquí y Allá en Californi</u> <u>Historia Verdadera de una Gota de Miel,</u> <u>Historia Verdadera de una Botella de Leche,</u> <u>Todo Mundo Lee</u>	

Intended as a stimulus to young listeners, these twelve readings evolved out of many conversations of the author with bi-lingual teachers. They are intended to stimulate delight in the Spanish language reflecting images and figures of speech familiar to Mexican children. Six more are prepared but remain unpublished.

1976 Where Do Stories Come From. Ginn and Company.

A fourth grade reader containing 8 poems from Zoo-Fun.

1974 Open Court. (a commercial bilingual program)

Includes poems from Mini-Libros in their list of literature of prominent authors from several countries to bring "the young and the great together."

1964 Merchants of Labor. Santa Barbara: McNally & Loftin
284 pp.

As the population grew and industrial growth lagged, Mexico continued to provide excess manpower to American industry. The outbreak of World War II initiated a system of government-to-government controlled migration which lasted for more than twenty years.

1973 Excerpts from Readings for College Compositions.
Jean E. Heywood, Dickenson Publishing Co., Inc.
pp. 17 - 26.

1956 Strangers in our Fields. Joint United States-Mexico
Trade Union Committee, 80 pp.

A compilation of field interviews with bracero farm laborers working in California during the 1955 fall harvests. The documented complaints provoked efforts at the highest levels of the state and federal government by Agri-Business to suppress the report. They did not succeed, and the document became pivotal in the long struggle to terminate the bracero program. (Out of print so copied for college courses in the Southwest.)

- 1970 Spiders in the House and Workers in the Fields. Notre Dame, Indiana: Notre Dame University Press, 306 pp.

Mexican emigrants, especially the vast majority who toiled in the fields, drifted into the lowest levels of the American economy. Over these levels a powerful branch of the business establishment, Agri-Business, set up a monitoring system that reached into the Congress of the United States. This book pursues the details of one of the major incidents of Agri-Business advocacy, the breaking of the DiGorgio Farm Workers' strike in 1950. (Used in college courses to exemplify methods of research and processes of Congressional committees.)

Miscellaneous Essays: (Chapters in the following publications)

- 1978 Immigrants—and Immigrants. Westport: Greenwood Press.
- 1977 Humanidad, Essays in Honor of George I. Sanchez. Regents of the University of California Chicano Studies Center.
- 1975 Chicano Content and Social Work Education. New York: Council on Social Work Education.
- 1974 Teaching the Bilingual. University of Arizona Press.
- 1973 Ghosts in the Barrio. San Rafael: Leswig Press.
- 1972 Plural Society in the Southwest. University of New Mexico Press.
- 1958 Problemas Agrícolas Industriales de México: Numero 1-2, Vol X. Publicado en México; Capítulo: "Trabajadores Mexicanos en Tierra Extraña" 80 pp.

- 1969 Economic Development of the Oakland/Mexican American Community. 20 pp.

The tidewater lowlands of the City of Oakland became the anchorage of an important ethnic community composed of laborers, craftsman, merchants and professionals of Mexican ancestry. The pressures and strains of metropolitan growth in the Bay Area compacted the Mexican-American community perennially threatened by urban decay. Resisting it, the Mexican-Americans developed a particular form of collective survival that is sketched in this report.

- 1955 Plantation Workers in Louisiana. Washington, D.C.:
Inter-American Education Association, 160 pp.

Describes living and working conditions in the sugar cane industry of Louisiana. In protest against these conditions, the National Agricultural Workers Union organized the first massive strike against the industry since the Civil War. This report raised issues by the government of accountability and administration of the Federal Sugar Act and the economic interest on which it was based.

- 1949 The Case of Bolivia.
Inter-American Reports, Number 6, 32 pp.

Gualberto Villaroel, President of Bolivia, was lynched on July 20, 1946 as part of a conspiracy orchestrated by La Rosca, the inner circle of the dominant cartel of tin producers. The assassination provoked a national uprising, the eclipse of La Rosca and the rise of revolutionary nationalism. Previous titles in this series of Reports were:

Armaments in the Western Hemisphere. Ernesto Galarza

Argentine Labor Under Peron. (Editor)

Economic Conflict in Inter-American Relations. (Editor)

The Cost of Living in Latin America. Ernesto Galarza

Crisis of the Pan American Union. (Editor)

- 1947 Labor Trends in Latin America.
Office of Labor and Social Information, The Pan American Union, 60 pp.

A field survey of working and living conditions in several Latin American nations, with notations on the organization of labor, housing conditions, cost of living and related concerns of working people.

- 1942 Young Readers Series. (edited by Ernesto Galarza)
the Pan American Union.

Ten short stories of historic characters, peoples and places to serve as an introduction to the study of Latin America:

The Pan American Union

The Incas

The Panama Canal

Jose de San Martin

The Snake Farm at Butantan

The Pan American Highway

Francisco Pizarro

The Araucanians

Cabeza de Vaca's Great Journey

The Guano Islands of Peru

- 1942 Labor in Latin America. Washington, D.C.:
The American Council on Public Affairs, 23 pp.

Survey of conditions.

- 1941 La Industria Electrica en Mexico (Spanish). Mexico
City: Fondo de Cultura Economica, 232 pp.

A monograph on the origins of the generation and industrial uses of electric power in Mexican industry. Outlines the beginnings of a major national industry in a system of private concessions to foreign capital that flourished during the dictatorship of Porfirio Diaz. Encouraged the scholarly investigation of the beginnings of industrialization in Mexico, and the publications of such studies in similar monographs.

- 1935-1930 6 untitled articles on Latin America for The Foreign Policy Association; 1 Article for The Nation; 1 Article for the New York Times.

- 1934 What Is Progressive Education; an Outline for Parents. Jamaica Estates, Long Island: The Yearlong School, 20 pp.

- 1935 Thirty Poems. Jamaica Estates, Long Island: The Yearlong School, 30 pp.

Incidental poetry of country and city life.

- 1928 The Catholic Church in Mexico. Sacramento:
The Capital Press, 188 pp.

A review of the liberal-conservative controversy that climaxed in the Cristero uprising of the 1920's. Projects into the 20th century the Church-State conflict that began with the Reform movement of the 1860's.

INDEX -- Ernesto Galarza

- agriculture, 38, 45
 - and farm workers, 32, 39-40, 44
 - and labor unions, 4-5, 8, 13-16, 19, 21, 23-25
 - and mechanization, 8
- Alizarde, Elias, 80
- Almaden Press, 115
- Alviso, California, 64-65, 72-73, 105, 107, 111
 - Project, 45-47, 52, 68
- Alviso Community Assistance Fund, 52-53, 57, 60, 69-70
- American Farm Workers Organizing Committee (AFWOC), 19-21, 24-25, 31
 - and bracero program, 16-19, 24
 - 1949 strike against DiGiorgio Corporation, 13-15
 - 1952 cotton strike, 23
- American Federation of Labor-Congress of Industrial Organization (AFL-CIO), 19-20, 22
 - 1952 national convention, 17
- Associated Farmers, 5, 39. See also agriculture
- Barrio Boy, 122-123
- braceros. See farm workers
- Brown, Edmund G., Sr.
 - and farm workers, 24
- Butcher's Union, 20
- California, State
 - Education, Department of, 84
 - Farm Labor Service, 24, 44
- California Federation of Labor, 19
- California Rural Legal Assistance, 42
- California State University, San Jose, 37, 78, 88
- Chabran, Ricardo, 27, 73
- Chambers, Pat, 25-26
- Chicano movement, 96-100, 107
- Chicanos. See Mexican Americans
- civil liberties, 25, 33
- Columbia University
 - Mexican American students at, 27-28, 34-35
 - Teachers College, 118
- COME (Community Organization to Monitor Education), 41-42
- community organization, 10-11, 37, 41-43, 45-47, 60
- courts, and social protest, 53, 57, 61, 72, 96, 105-106
- Decker, Caroline, 25
- DiGiorgio Corporation, 1947 strike, 13-15, 19, 23

Economic Opportunity Act, 1964 (U.S.), 10-11

education

administration, 12, 85, 89, 103, 110

bilingual, 28, 40-43, 52, 58-69, 75, 77-83, 86, 91, 97, 99-100, 113-115, 121-132, 136

funding, 75-76, 79, 82-86, 89-90, 102-103

minority, 76

progressive, 118

education, higher, 27-31, 34-42, 46-47, 55, 78, 97, 107-109

Chicano studies, 48

teacher training, 63, 87-88

El Dorado Distributors, 116

Elementary and Secondary Education Act, U.S. (1965), 62, 64, 94-95, 101

Everett, Ralph, 29

EYOA, 6, 11

farmworkers, 1, 6, 31, 45

bracero program, 15-19, 32-33, 39, 44

and public opinion, 24-25

and unions, 4-5, 8, 13

See also American Farmworkers Organizing Committee; United Farm Workers Farm Workers and Agribusiness in California, 1947-1960, 38

Galarza, Mae (Mrs. Ernesto), 56-57, 79, 80, 114, 118, 122, 126-127, 130

Galarza family, 114, 118, 129, 132, 134-135

Gorman, Pat, 20

growers' associations, 32-33, 44

Hayes, Ed, 24

immigration, 33, 71, 76, 93-96, 98-99

Knight, Superintendent, 91

labor unions, 31

agricultural, 4-5, 8, 13-25

and lobbying, 19, 22

LARAS Fund, 64-65

lobbying, 75

and labor unions, 19, 22

Los Angeles, Mexican community in, 3, 11, 12, 97

Meany, George, 20, 22

Martinez, Olivia, 42-43, 69n, 83, 91

Mexican American Community Services Agency (MACSA), 65, 68-69

- Mexican Americans, 77, 79, 96
 - as college students, 28-31, 33, 35-37, 46
 - communities, 1, 6-10, 30-31, 89, 93, 95, 100, 104
 - compulsory mobility of, 31-33, 44-46
 - cultural heritage, 2-4, 68, 80, 98-99, 118-121, 123-4, 125, 128, 132-4
 - and government, 43, 76, 98
 - in Los Angeles, 9, 11
 - organizations, 5, 41-42
 - role models, 27
 - terminology, 49-50, 96
 - See also education, bilingual
- Mexico, 94-95, 99
 - agreements with U.S., 32
 - land reform in, 17-18
 - nationals in U.S., 16-18, 32-33
 - 1917 Revolution, 4, 17
 - village life, 2-3
- Mini Libros, 68, 85-86, 113-132, 136
- Mitchell, H. L., 14, 20, 54-55

- National Farm Labor Union, 1, 45
- Negroes, and Mexican Americans, 96-97
- Nixon, Richard, 13-14, 23

- Occidental College, 28-30

- Pan-American Union, 51-52
- poverty, 9, 11-12, 17-18

- race relations, 127, 130, 134-135
- Ramirez, 116
- Rascon, Vincente, 117, 122
- Regional Farm Labor Operations Advisory Committee (RFLOAC), 39-40
- Reuther, Walter, 20, 22

- Sacramento
 - high school, 29
 - Mexican community, 30
- San Jose, 105
 - master plan, 45, 65, 72
 - Mexican community in, 33, 89, 94-95, 104
 - Unified School District, 64, 66, 67, 80-81, 85, 101, 103, 124
 - See also education, bilingual
- Santa Clara County, 45, 57
 - Bilingual Education Consortium, 41-43, 59, 61-63, 66-67, 68, 70, 75-76, 82-83, 87, 91, 102-103
 - Mexican Americans in, 100-101
 - See also Alviso; San Jose

Schneider, Art, 117
 Shelley, John, 3
 Shephard, William, 34-35, 40, 52, 54
 Stanford University, Galarza papers at, 51, 55-56
 Studio Laboratory (bilingual education), 57, 61-63, 65-67, 70-71, 75, 76-82, 87-88, 104, 122-124

Teamsters Union, 21

United Farm Workers union, 13, 21-25

United States

Bilingual Education, Office of, 43, 61-62, 75-76, 86, 101
 congress, 13-15, 84, 90, 94-95
 Economic Opportunity Program, 10-12
 Health, Education, and Welfare, Department of, 61-62, 71, 83
 Immigration Service, 33, 71
 Labor, Department of, 96
 bracero program, 16-19, 32-33, 39, 40, 44
 Model Cities program, 79

University of California, Berkeley

Chicano Studies Library, 73
 Giannini Foundation, 25
 and institutionalization, 47

University of California, Santa Cruz

bilingual education studies, 28, 34, 40-42, 59, 90

Werdel, Thomas, 14-15

Whitney, John Hay, Foundation, 77-78

Young, Craig, 80

TIMOTHY A. BEARD

I have been a bilingual teacher in elementary school for eight years and have had a special interest in children's literature in Spanish. I was one of the organizers of the Primera Conferencia Internacional de Literature Infantil en Espanol which was held in San Francisco in 1978. It was then that I met Mae and Ernesto Galarza for the first time although I had used the Mini Libros in my classroom and had admired their author for many years.

Gabrielle Morris

Graduate of Connecticut College, New London, 1950, in economics; independent study in journalism and creative writing; additional study at Trinity College and Stanford University.

Historian, U.S. Air Force, documenting Berlin Air Lift, other issues of 1945-1952; public relations and advertising for retail and theater organizations in Connecticut; research, writing, policy development on Bay Area community issues for University of California, Bay Area Council of Social Planning, Berkeley Unified School District, League of Women Voters.

Interviewer-editor, Regional Oral History Office, The Bancroft Library, 1970-present. Coordinator, Government History Documentation Project, 1979-present, which focuses on oral documentation of selected administrative and legislative issues in the gubernatorial administrations of Earl Warren, Goodwin Knight, Edmund G. Brown, Sr., and Ronald Reagan.

13-6457
N. B. F.

